

Old Sleuth Library

RANLEAGH, THE LIGHTNING IRISH DETECTIVE.
BY "OLD SLEUTH."

A SERIES OF THE MOST THRILLING DETECTIVE STORIES EVER PUBLISHED.

No. 71.

{ SINGLE
NUMBER. }

GEORGE MUNRO'S SONS, PUBLISHERS,
Nos. 17 to 27 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.

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CHAPTER I.

"Yees needn't be afraid, boys; I'm no ghost!"

The fast pilot boat No. — had slipped her cable with a full complement of pilots ready to be transferred to incoming vessels, and had glided out to sea. She had left Sandy Hook far in the distance, and as night fell was far out on the ocean, skimming over the waters under a cloudless sky, from which shone the moon in silvery brilliance.

The corps of pilots had gathered in the cabin for their evening snack, when suddenly a figure appeared in their midst, and the men glared as though it were an apparition come up out of the sea; and it was then that the exclamation was uttered with which we open our narrative:

"Yees needn't be afraid, boys; I'm no ghost!"

The figure of a greenhorn stood before the amazed men—an Irishman, in appearance, who had just left the environs of Donegal.

There was no such man in the crew. The latter, who were all told off, were old hands aboard, and well known, and no one had seen the stranger until, as related, he appeared at the festive board of the pilots like a second Alonzo returned from the wars.

Pilots are rugged and brave men, and in a moment those who beheld the appearance recovered their nerve, and one of them demanded:

"Where in thunder did you come from?"

"Well, I'll be afther tellin' yees whin yees hev invited me to hev somethin' to ate."

"Something to eat? No, no, Mister Stowaway, but it's overboard you'll go to feed the fishes!"

"Faith, yees wouldn't throw a poor boy overboard; would yees, now?"

"Over you go, Pat; a stowaway on a pilot boat, indeed! We'll nip this new game in the bud. You're the pioneer, Pat, and the last of the class at this game!"

The Irishman who had made such a marvelous appearance in their midst did not appear to be at all disconcerted, but laughed in merry manner as he said:

"Yees will feed me before yees make food of me for the fishes. Shure, it's a slim meal ye'd give them if ye tossed me over afther the fast I've had!"

New York pilots are as generous as well as brave body of men, and they admired the wit and coolness of the stowaway.

"Will you tell us where you came from?"

"Whin yees come to me terms; otherwise I'll let yees think I'm a ghost. And if yees toss me over, hungry as I am now, I'll haest

yer boat for evermore, upbraiding yees as the meanest crew that ever sailed from New York harbor!"

"Let's feed the rascal before we drown him," suggested one of the men.

The suggestion was accepted, and the stowaway was invited to the table.

There were four pilots in the cabin besides the sailing captain of the boat, and they were highly amused and entertained with the adventure, and determined to have lots of fun out of it; and it was also resolved to take some of the audacity out of the brazen fellow who had joined their company so singularly and unceremoniously.

The Irishman had astonished them by his appearance; he had amazed them with his nerve and cheek, and he naturally astonished them when he sat down at the table and let out a little more. He pitched into the solid food set before him with a lively appetite, and suddenly said, addressing the captain by name:

"It's good livin' ye fellers hev aboard here! Shure, I'm glad to be wid yees!"

One of the pilots said:

"You're a daisy, you are! but if you fill up that way, the fish will have a better meal when you go over to them than you are enjoying now."

To the speaker's astonishment, the strange comer addressed him by name, and said:

"Faith, if the fish are as hungry as I were whin I sat down here, they'll enjoy their meal indade!"

The men stared. How did this nondescript come to know the captain's name?

Another of the pilots addressed him, and he also was recognized by his name, and so were the others successively, and in the most ready manner.

The men did not know what to make of it, and looked into one another's faces inquiringly, while their uninvited visitor pitched into the food.

At length he drew back from the table, and coolly asked:

"Well, where is it?"

"Where is what?"

"The whisky. Faith, ye wouldn't toss a man overboard wid-out givin' him a drink, would yees?"

"You'll get your fill when you go over."

"Will I? Well, it's to kape the water out I want the whisky."

One of the pilots said, in a stern voice:

"Maybe you think we're joking?"

"Do I? Not a bit! Shure, when I swam out to yees, do yees think I can't swim ashore ag'in?"

"You'll have yer chance."
 "Will I now?"
 "You will."
 "Well, give us the whisky, and I'll say I'm ready to be drowned."
 The pilots held a whispered consultation, and one of them said:
 "I tell you, fellows, I believe this chap is a ghost!"
 "Faith, I ate loike a ghost!"
 "It's no use throwing him over," said a second; "let's hang him
 so the bowsprit or string him up to the yard. I've heard you can't
 drown a ghost, but you can hang him."
 "Faith, if yees do that, it's dead bait ye'll be givin' the fishes."
 The whisky-bottle was passed to the visitor. He took a good
 swig, and smacking his lips, said:
 "Well, boys, I'm ready!"
 "Ready for what?" came the question.
 "I'm ready to be hung!" came the cool answer.

CHAPTER II.

THE pilots were nettled; they were getting really mad, and they
 tacitly resolved to proceed to pretty severe measures, and give the
 interloper a scare that would make him beg for his life on his knees.

"You are ready, eh?"
 "I am."
 "Well, come along; we're ready also."
 The men led the visitor up to the deck. It was a magnificent
 night; not a ripple ruffled the face of the waters, and the moon
 never shone more resplendently. It was just the sort of night for
 the work in hand.

The captain of the boat became master of ceremonies, and asked:
 "Shall we give the wretch a trial?"

The suggestion was accepted, and the captain was selected to act
 as judge, and one of the pilots was assigned as counsel for the
 prisoner, while another offered to act as prosecuting attorney.

The captain took his seat; the crew were gathered around, and
 an air of sober decorum prevailed.

The stowaway's hands were tied with a rope. He was stood up
 in the center of the strange group, and his volunteer counsel asked:

"What is the charge against my client?"

"The charge is that the prisoner stowed himself away on board
 this boat with the intent of murdering the crew and stealing the
 boat."

"What proof have you to produce that he stowed himself away
 in the boat?"

The crew were called one after the other, and every man denied
 having invited the prisoner aboard, and all testified that they had
 not seen him until he openly appeared on deck.

"That is all the testimony for the prosecution," said the pilot
 who was acting for captain and crew.

"I wish the prisoner to take the stand," said his counsel; and
 when the stowaway was arraigned, the question was put:

"Who asked you to come aboard this boat?"

"No one."

"When did you come aboard?"

"Some time ago—at me own leisure and sweet will."

"What was your purpose in coming aboard?"

"That's me own business."

"And what have you to say for yourself?"

"Divil a word."

"You have no defense to offer?"

"Divil a word."

"You plead guilty?"

"Divil a word hev I to say."

The prisoner maintained his cool and saucy demeanor, and the
 pilots looked upon his behavior as a piece of genuine cheek and
 bravado.

"Let the case go to the jury," said the counsel for the defense.

The jury speedily decided. A black cap was improvised, which
 the judge put on his head, and pronounced the sentence of death,
 using the formula of the judges so well known to all readers of
 the daily papers.

After sentence was pronounced, the question was put:

"Prisoner, what have you to say?"

"Divil a word."

The court adjourned. A rope was swung over the yard, a noose
 made and passed over the head of the condemned man, and the
 crew caught hold of the line.

One of the pilots stepped up to the stowaway, and said:

"My good fellow, this is no joke. You are to hang. Will you
 explain why you came on board?"

"Divil a word hev I to say."

"Have you any message to leave?"

"Divil a word."

"Will you say a prayer?"

"Divil a word."

"Will you confess and ask pardon?"

"Divil a word."

The captain stepped back, and said:

"I will count one, two, three, and when I say three, up with
 him."

The prisoner never moved.

"The last chance, my man. Will you beg for mercy and con-

fess?"

"Divil a word hev I to say."

"One!" said the captain.

A silence followed—indeed, an awful silence.

"Two!" called the captain; and he once more addressed the

prisoner.

"Will you confess?"

"Divil a word."

"Three!" called the captain, and the men pulled on the rope; but
 the prisoner was not lifted two feet from the deck when the rope
 was cut and he fell down and rolled over. In an instant he was
 raised to his feet and the noose jerked from his throat. He gave
 one gasp, rubbed his throat a moment, and said:

"Will yees give us another whisky?"

The pilots were beaten. The man would not scare, and he was
 led back to the cabin and handed a glass of whisky.

The men had come to admire him for his pluck, and one of them
 put out his hand and asked:

"What's your name?"

"Eh? What do yees want to know for?"

"You're a good man, and we forgive you for coming on board.
 You're pardoned."

"Am I pardoned?"

"Yes."

The man laughed, and dropping the brogue, said:

"It was a terrible jerk you gave me."

The men glared in greater astonishment.

"Who in thunder are you, anyhow?"

"You all know me well enough."

The men disclaimed all recognition.

"And not one of you recognize me?"

The men disclaimed all knowledge.

The stowaway suddenly removed the wig and a few other articles
 of disguise, and the pilots gazed aghast.

"Ranleigh the detective!" they exclaimed.

"The same, at yer sarvice, boys."

"What on earth, old man, are you up to, anyhow?"

The pilots crowded around their old-time friend.

The latter smiled good-naturedly, and said:

"You didn't make me take water, boys, but I went well into
 your whisky."

"If we'd only known it was you, Jack! but tell us what on earth
 it all means."

"Well, boys, I've a job on hand out your way here."

"But why did you come abroad as a stowaway?"

"I'll tell you; I never take chances; I was watched."

"But we could have stowed you aboard."

"That is all right; and I hadn't time to arrange with you, so I
 just stowed away for a few hours, and, to tell the truth, I fell
 asleep, and came from my refuge later than I intended."

"But why didn't you disclose yourself?"

"Well, I'm fond of a joke now and then, and I saw you fellows
 meant to make me squeal, and I thought I'd take the chances."

"But the choking you got?"

"It was a wrench on my neck, I'll admit; but the joke was too
 good, and I wouldn't squeal even if you had hung me outright."

"Well, we're glad to see you—glad that it's no worse—and
 would like to hear what you're up to."

"Well, boys, I'll tell you all about it—some day."

CHAPTER III.

JACK RANLEAGH was a heroic fellow, and the *beau idéal* of a
 detective. He had been born in Ireland, but at an early age had
 been brought to the United States by his uncle. He received his
 education in the public schools, became a policeman, and later on
 a detective, and was detailed as a special to watch incoming
 steamers and other vessels from abroad in response to cable mes-
 sages concerning escaped prisoners.

He was a daring fellow, had become an expert in disguises, and
 had worked more cunning and ingenious little games of their kind
 than any man ever specially detailed to his specific duty.

Some weeks prior to the opening of our story, Jack had received
 a letter from Dublin concerning certain matters, and had been
 requested to be on the lookout for an individual whose appearance
 was given, and the evening preceding the sailing of the pilot boat
 he had received a cablegram worded as follows:

"Traced. Left in the steamer that sailed from Queenstown on
 the twentieth. Look for him."

It was on the twenty-first our hero received the cablegram, and
 at the last moment he determined upon a novel expedient. He re-
 solved to go down on a pilot boat and board the incoming steamer,
 and take his observations during the day or two he might be on
 board while the vessel was sailing into port.

He ran but little risk in sighting the steamer, as he knew the
 course the line took, and hit upon a boat that he thought would
 most likely intercept the particular steamer he was to board.

It was as much of a joke as anything else that led him to board
 the boat as a stowaway. He thought it would be good fun to
 appear suddenly among the pilots, with all of whom he was well
 acquainted; and so it proved, although, as he always afterward
 said, he never expected to come so near hanging again without
 going the "whole hog."

Jack Ranleigh related as much of the above statement as he
 thought necessary, and fell into a good time with the pilots.

Our daring pilots go way out to sea. The writer, coming on a
 steamer from the other side, has seen a pilot taken aboard when
 one of the fastest steamers was three days from port.

The pilot boat had been out three days, when one evening, just
 before sundown, a large steamer was sighted. There were several
 pilot boats in sight, but the one on which the detective had taken
 passage was in the direct course of the great leviathan, and the
 chances were all in her favor of securing the prize.

The men were at their glasses, when one of them, in answer to Jack's question, said:

"That's your steamer, and we've got her dead sure!"

"Who will go aboard?"

"I will."

"And you will take me with you?"

"Certainly."

"How will you account for my presence?"

"Oh, I will tell the truth; say you are a stowaway on our boat, and that we have no use for you."

Jack shrugged his shoulders and said:

"My trials may be just commencing."

"How so?"

"They may find use for me on the steamer."

"Put you to shoveling coal, eh?"

"Yes."

"You'd rather be hung?"

"I would."

"Well, Jack, I can fix that."

"With the captain?"

"Yes; and the steward. You need have no fear."

"But will you need to give me away?"

"I guess not."

It was full sundown when the steamer and pilot came near enough for the latter to lower a boat. The detective got into the boat along with his friend, and they were soon alongside of the great steamer. The lift had been lowered from the latter, the boat drifted straight away to the right point, and the pilot and the detective were soon on board the big ship.

All bets as concerned the pilot were determined; but as to Jack, all bets were off, as none of the wagering passengers had taken him into account.

The pilot exchanged a few words with the captain and afterward with the steward, and Jack Ranleagh was later on sent forward to abide with the steerage passengers. Matters had been fixed for him, and, as far as the cabin passengers were concerned, his existence was forgotten, and the steerage people were led to believe that he was a stowaway, who had been put off an outgoing steamer, and was being sent back whence he started.

Meantime our hero made himself good company with the people in the steerage. He was an Irishman to the backbone, seemingly, and as merry as a cricket.

So the detective appeared; but in reality he had his eyes and ears about him, and was up to business all the time; and it was not long before he spotted his man—the absconder whom he had been set to lay for. He had also fallen upon another lay—a drama in real life which suggested an underlying mystery of strange weirdness.

Among the passengers in the steerage was a beautiful girl evidently not more than eighteen. She appeared to be traveling alone, and kept herself aloof from all the other passengers. She was plainly but comfortably dressed, and never exchanged a word voluntarily with a person on the ship. Most of her time was spent on deck, and it was not long before the ever-watchful detective discovered that her meals were brought from the first-class table, and in a secret manner. She did not appear to require hearty or abundant fare, but what she did consume was of the choicest and best, delivered by a stewardess who was likely well paid for the service.

We have said that the girl was handsome. Such was the fact; but it had taken the detective to ascertain the fact, since he had discovered that she was partially under a disguise. There had evidently been an attempt made to conceal her rare comeliness.

Ranleagh had not been twenty hours on the vessel before he had piped all the little facts we have recorded, and several others which raised a suspicion that the girl had a history.

On one fact he felt assured—her being a passenger in the steerage was not because lack of means for the purchase of a first-class passage. He was satisfied she had abundance of money, and the attempt to conceal her good looks was another startling incident, and suggestive of a romantic history.

The detective kept a constant watch upon the girl, and within the first twenty hours, as stated, had not only learned all the facts we have recorded, but dropped also to the fact that he was not the only person who was keeping a secret surveillance over the mysterious steerage passenger. There was an old man aboard—a decrepit and miserable-looking object—who was also watching the girl, and our hero discovered that the object of this double surveillance was unconscious of it, and seemingly assumed that she was passing unnoticed.

"I reckon I'll watch this old man a bit," mentally concluded the detective; and he did set to work to pipe the old fellow, and soon made several singular and startling discoveries.

CHAPTER IV.

It was the second night our hero had been on board. The steamer had made but little progress that day, owing to a disarrangement of her machinery, which had to be repaired.

It was just after sundown, and the mysterious passenger had ascended to the forward deck, and sitting right near the prow of the steamer, had remained a long time gazing at the water. The detective took up a position from whence unseen he could gaze on the girl and watch her movements. He had been thus ensconced a long time when he saw the decrepit old man come feebly climbing the ladder-way and totter to a place near the girl.

Ranleagh got many points in a short time. He detected the old man's eyes roaming around in a furtive manner, and then they would be fixed upon the girl.

Our hero was a quick reader of expression and actions, and a

cold chill ran through his heart as the conviction was forced upon him that the old man's intentions were hostile; and later on he was forced to the conclusion that the girl was in peril, and he was determined that she should not be left alone on the deck.

As the night wore on, one after another left the deck, and only the girl and the old man remained, when the latter slowly but surely kept edging toward the place where the absorbed girl sat.

The detective ascended the ladder and took up a position on the deck, and from that moment the edging process of the old man ceased. It was proved that he desired to crawl near to the girl only while he believed himself alone with her, and the detective was satisfied that it was for this that he had waited.

It was eleven o'clock when the girl arose, crossed the deck, and descended the ladder. She had sat there in one position for three hours without hardly moving.

The detective remained; he did not follow the girl. He was set to watch the man. Ranleagh stretched himself on the deck, along the rail, not far from where the old man crouched, and pretended to fall asleep, as he could be heard breathing heavily.

Fifteen minutes passed, and the old man rose from the spot where he had so long watchfully crouched. He started to pace the deck with feeble step, but soon his walk became more active and vigorous, and, seemingly lost in thought, he forgot himself momentarily, threw aside his mask, and paced to and fro with as firm a step as the strongest man on the vessel.

The detective lay low and beheld the sudden change from decrepitude to strength and vigor.

"Aha!" he muttered, "just as I thought. Mister Old Man, you're under a disguise, and I'll go under your cover yet and learn who and what you are. What's more, your game is up. The girl is safe; I'll stand between you and her at all hazards!"

The detective suddenly awoke and rose to his feet. The actor was recalled to himself; the firm, strong pace fell back to the feeble totter, and the fellow stole down the deck, crept down the ladder, and disappeared.

"Well," muttered Ranleagh, "I've got him down fine, that's sure."

Our hero pondered for a long time seeking to hit upon some plan of action, and he was still revolving the matter in his mind when the girl once more appeared upon the deck. She moved forward to her old position, and Ranleagh determined to act quickly, as he knew the girl would not be permitted to remain there a moment after having been seen by the officer of the forward watch. He approached her ere she had crossed half the distance of the deck, and said:

"It's a fine evenin'."

The girl glanced at him with a look of surprise and alarm in her eyes, and started to move away, going toward the ladder, when the detective quickly stepped beside her, and in a low voice, devoid of the brogue, said:

"Hold! you are in danger! You have a secret enemy on board."

The girl again turned and fixed her startled eyes upon him.

"I would exchange a few words with you in your own interest."

Ranleagh was accustomed to taking a decided step in an emergency, and he had on the moment so resolved to do on the occasion of which we write.

"Who are you?" demanded the girl in a low voice.

"I am the man who came on board with the pilot."

"The stowaway?"

The question showed that the girl listened if she did not speak.

"Yes."

"And you would speak with me?"

"Yes."

The detective had made a second startling discovery; the few times he had previously heard the girl speak, she had spoken with a broad Irish accent; but at the time he addressed her, she was evidently thrown off her guard; her brogue was dropped, and she spoke with the clear and pleasant enunciation of an Irish lady of education and refinement.

"What can you have to say to me?"

"I tell you that you have an enemy on board."

"I have an enemy on board?"

"Yes."

"Why should I have an enemy on board?"

"Probably you can answer that better to your own satisfaction."

"How do you know I have an enemy on board?"

"There is a man watching every move you make."

The girl turned pale. The alarmed look deepened in her eyes, and she visibly trembled.

She repeated:

"There is a man watching me?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"I have been watching him."

"This is all very strange."

"Will you speak a few words with me?"

"I am speaking to you now."

"But we may be watched."

"Watched!" ejaculated the girl.

"Yes."

"By whom?"

"By the man who has you under constant surveillance."

"What would you suggest?"

"Pass along to the stern of the boat, way past the entrance to the cabin."

"I will not be permitted to go there. I am a steerage passenger."

"It will be all right. I will see you are not impeded. If you are stopped, say you are a cabin passenger."

"The officer will know better."

"We shall see. Go quickly."

The girl hesitated a moment; but when the detective said: "I have something very important to tell you," she glided away.

Ranleagh followed her down the steps and looked around to see if the old man was in sight. The fellow was nowhere visible, and he followed the girl. The moon was under a cloud, and the girl passed along without question, and ere she passed the cabin companion-way she was joined by our hero, who led her under the shadow of the gear-room, and seizing a couple of steamer-chairs from the rack, he placed them for the convenience of both.

One of the ship's men came and glanced at them; but when our hero said: "It's all right," he passed along.

CHAPTER V.

A MOMENT'S silence followed, broken at length by the detective, who said:

"You are surprised at what I have said?"

"I am. Are you an Irishman?"

"I am an Irishman by birth, but I was reared in the United States."

"Why were you put aboard of this steamer?"

"I did not come here with any view of meeting you."

"You are not a stowaway?"

"I am not."

The girl spoke in tremulous tones as she said:

"You told me I was being watched?"

"I did."

"It's strange you should discover that fact."

"Why strange?"

"It is strange you should take such an interest in me as would lead you to the discovery."

"I will be perfectly frank with you."

"Please do."

"The first discovery I made, after coming aboard this vessel, was that there was a passenger in disguise."

"You are an officer?"

"Do you not know that the Government sends revenue officers to sea oftentimes to board incoming vessels?"

"Ah, I see."

"And you will then discern how it is that I come to make close observations?"

"And you discovered a person under disguise?"

"Yes."

"A man or a woman?"

"A woman."

Again there was a silence, broken the second time by the detective, who said:

"Miss, it was not lack of means that caused you to take a steerage passage on this steamer?"

The girl remained silent.

"You are under a disguise; you have assumed plain clothes, coarse shoes, and you have sought to conceal your natural comeliness; you assumed the brogue in your speech. But you are accustomed to fine clothes; it is the first time coarse shoes have incased your feet; your beauty still shines from under the daubs of paint and the false hair you wear, and it is more natural for you to speak clear English than puzzle your tongue with the brogue."

The girl sat silent trembling.

Continuing, the detective said:

"You have no reason to fear me. I shall not inquire into your reasons for assuming a disguise and starting for America in the steerage; if you should choose to tell me, it might be better for you. All I know is that a villain is upon your track—a man who means you harm."

"I do not see how there can be any one on this vessel who knows me."

"There is a man on this boat in disguise."

"A man in disguise?"

"Yes."

"Who is watching me?"

"Yes."

"I have been watchful; it is strange I have not discovered the fact."

"It is a fact, nevertheless. I have not been on this boat fifty hours yet, and I have discovered all the facts I have but just made known to you."

"Will you describe the man who has been watching me?"

"You were a long time forward this evening?"

"I was."

"Did you observe any one on the deck besides yourself?"

"Several; but I did not pay particular attention to them."

"Did you observe a decrepit old man?"

The girl gave a start.

"Now that you call my attention to the fact, I remember that I saw the decrepit old man quite often."

"Ah! you remember now?"

"Is he the one who is watching me?"

"Yes."

"What can be his purpose?"

"As I said before, you can decide that in your own mind, I reckon."

"And you think the man is an enemy?"

"I do; I think he only awaits an opportunity to do you harm."

"Do me harm?" repeated the girl.

"Yes."

"What harm can he intend?"

"Do you possess a good nerve?"

"I do."

"You will not make an outcry?"

"I will not."

"I truly believe that man awaits an opportunity to kill you."

"To kill me?" repeated the girl, in an alarmed and trembling tone.

"Yes."

A moment's silence followed, broken at length by the girl, who said:

"Are you telling me the truth, sir?"

"I am."

"You are in disguise?"

"I am."

"Why?"

"I am a spy."

"You are frank."

"There is no reason why I should not be so to you, because I know, under the circumstances, you will not betray me."

"Can you satisfy me that your story is true?"

"Which part of my story?"

"As concerns yourself?"

"I can."

"By whom?"

"The pilot. Listen: if you have secret enemies, the pilot can not be one of them; and if he confirms my story concerning myself, I can not be an enemy."

"What shall I do?" murmured the girl.

"You are safe, miss, as far as the man who is watching you is concerned."

"How do you know that I am safe?"

"I will undertake to assure your safety as far as he is concerned."

"Oh, sir, I do not know what to do!"

"I can tell you."

"Pray do."

"Confide in me."

"Confide in you, sir?"

"Yes."

"What am I to tell you?"

"Tell me why you are a steerage passenger on this vessel—why you are in disguise."

"I can do that readily. The fact is as you state it—simply because I desired to escape all chance of recognition."

"On the part of whom?"

"Every one."

"You can tell me no more. Tell me why you go to America? Tell me why this man should seek to destroy you? He must have a powerful motive, and I am convinced he means you dire harm if the opportunity offers."

"I go to seek a brother in America."

"Does your brother know of your coming?"

"No; I do not know even if he is alive."

"How long since you saw him?"

"It's five years since he left Ireland."

"And have you never heard from him?"

"Never."

"Have you parents?"

"We are orphans."

Further conversation was interrupted by the girl's suddenly giving a start, and whispering:

"There is the decrepit old man."

The girl was sitting so she could be seen easily by one across the deck; the detective was back in the shadow, and might escape observation.

In a low, quick tone, he whispered:

"Dare you aid me to uncover that man?"

"How can I?"

"Go back to your cabin; to-morrow wait for a signal from me, and I will have a plan arranged."

"I will aid you," said the girl; and she rose and walked toward the steerage deck.

Ranleagh followed her until she passed to the emigrant quarters, when he sat down and revolved the matter in his mind. He had made great progress in a short time.

He was still sitting under the shadow of the captain's bridge, when he saw a man pass. He recognized the pilot.

"Halloo, Ranleagh, old man, how is biz?"

"All right. When will we reach port?"

"If this weather holds, we will be off Quarantine by sundown to-morrow night. I will just catch the right tide for crossing the bar."

Upon the following morning the detective was mousing around the forward deck hoping to see the old man; but he did not put in an appearance. The day wore on, and Ranleagh searched the vessel from stem to stern, but the old man was nowhere to be found.

He saw the girl, but she had not seen the old man. He made inquiries of the steward in charge of the steerage, but he could give no information.

"Can it be," asked the girl, as the vessel was running inside the bar, "that the man has committed himself to the sea?"

"No," came the answer.

It was night when the vessel lay off Quarantine. The mysterious lady passenger was to meet our hero at a certain hour. She came not, and later on it was discovered that she too was missing.

CHAPTER VI.

THERE was the usual excitement attendant upon a steamer's arrival with a large complement of passengers. A special boat had come down to meet the steamer, and a great many strangers were put on board; quite a number also came down on the customs

boat, and the ship was thronged as she was stopped for the visit of the health authorities.

Ranleagh searched every part of the vessel, but the girl had disappeared.

The detective was baffled, and at the same moment a sense of deep mortification came over him. He felt that he had been nicely deceived. The suspicion crossed his mind that the seemingly innocent girl and the decrepit old man were confederates. And how squarely he had given himself away! One fact was certain: if the girl had left the vessel, she had done so voluntarily; and another strange incident was the fact that the decrepit old man had disappeared immediately after the conversation Ranleagh had held with the girl.

The detective had gone upon the vessel for an entirely different purpose than the adventure with the girl. As far as that part of his scheme went, he was all right. He had spotted his man, and was prepared to make an arrest the moment the fellow left the steamer; and the latter job he performed in a neat and clever manner.

He took his surprised prisoner to head-quarters, and turned him over, and the arrest was put down to his credit as a neat piece of detective work.

Having disposed of his prisoner, he returned to the steamer, hoping to catch the girl or the man looking for their baggage; but he failed.

He had committed one oversight while on board the ship—he had not asked the girl her name; and when he went to the records, he found it impossible to secure an identification, and he became satisfied that the steerage steward had been posted.

The detective visited the steamer again upon the following morning and lay around on the dead watch. He was so deeply mortified at being so nicely done for, that he was the more anxious to catch on once more to a clew.

He remained on the dock until near noon, when a gentleman came down in a cab, alighted, and went aboard the steamer. Ranleagh was watching the man in a cursory manner, when suddenly he exclaimed:

"May I be kicked by crippled spiders if I haven't got him!"

Our readers will remember that the old man on the steamer had once forgotten his assumed rôle while he paced the deck, and at that time Ranleagh, who was watching the fellow, detected a peculiarity in his walk, and as the man who had arrived in the cab crossed the wharf to board the steamer, our hero noticed the same peculiarity, and at once he was upon the man's track.

A little time passed, and the man reappeared, accompanied by a porter who carried a portmanteau and several other little articles in the way of traveling parcels.

Later on the man identified a trunk, and the latter, with other articles, was subjected to the custom house formalities and subsequently placed upon the cab.

The detective determined to resort to a daring maneuver. He waited until he saw the man he was watching go aboard the ship, when he approached the driver of the cab. He saw the fellow was a miserable dog. Ranleagh showed his shield, and the fellow turned pale, when the detective said:

"Come down a moment!"

The man alighted, and our hero said:

"See here, Johnny, I am going to arrest your passenger!"

"Yes, sir," said the man, trembling as though the officer had said "I am going to arrest you. I've got nothing to do with him, officer. He hired me, that's all!"

"Yes, I understand; and now listen to me. When I arrest him I want you to drive to the corner of Washington and Jay Streets."

"Yes, sir."

"You wait there until I come."

"Yes, sir."

"If you fail me you get into trouble. I've got you 'mugged'!"

"I'll be there."

"If you do as I say you'll make a stake five times what your passenger would pay you."

"I understand, sir."

The detective was satisfied in his own mind that it was contraband luggage in the cab; at any rate, he was resolved to get possession of it, even though he were compelled to overstep the bounds of legal procedure. He was conscious of his own honest intentions, and, should time really develop that the baggage legally belonged to the man, it could be returned. Our hero, however, as intimated, had strong suspicions.

One mystery was explained—the disappearance of the decrepit man on the steamer. The fellow's disguise had been well taken, and when he discarded it he had been able to defy all detection for the time being.

The second mystery was—what had become of the girl? And it was this latter the officer was determined to solve.

The man spent a long time on the steamer, but at length returned and got into the cab.

Ranleagh had given specific instructions to the cabman, and when the passenger returned, the officer, who was also in disguise, glided from the dock and took up a position fully two squares distant. A few moments passed and the cab came along. The officer stepped to the curb and beckoned the driver to haul into the sidewalk, and when the cab was halted, Ranleagh opened the door and glanced in upon the passenger.

The latter betrayed considerable surprise, and more impatience and anger.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"You!" came the answer.

"Me!" ejaculated man.

"Yes."

"I do not understand."

The detective displayed his shield.

"Will you explain?"

"You are under arrest, sir."

"Under arrest!" repeated the man.

"Yes, sir."

"On what charge?"

"The charge will be explained at the proper time."

"But there is some mistake here."

"No, there is no mistake."

"There must be. I have not been a day in the country yet. I was a passenger on the last steamer."

"I know it. I've been laying for you."

"Laying for me?"

"Yes."

"I tell you, officer, there must be some mistake."

"Where is the girl?" demanded Ranleagh.

The man trembled and turned pale.

CHAPTER VII.

RANLEAGH knew that his points were all right the moment he saw the startled look overshadow the man's face.

"Come," he said, "I've no time to spare."

"But I can not go with you."

"Do you offer resistance?"

The man appeared to indulge a moment's thought, when he ran his hand down into his pocket, drew forth a handful of gold, and said:

"Here: if this is what you are after, take it; I'm in a hurry."

"I'm after you, my friend," and the officer spoke in a decided tone, and at the same instant drew a club. "Will you come?" he added.

The man alighted from the cab, and said to the driver:

"You remain here until my return. I will pay you for your time."

"All right," came the answer; and the man walked away with our hero.

"What is your name?" demanded the detective.

"I will tell my name when brought before the proper authorities, and I tell you now this is an outrage, and you will suffer for your acts."

"I will ask you a few questions: You came over on the steamer—?"

"I did."

"You played a double rôle there. You appeared among the steerage passengers as an old man, and you were spotting a beautiful young girl among them."

The man turned pale, but denied the truth of the accusation.

"Oh, it's no use for you to deny the facts; I've got you down fine enough. Now, see here: you can save yourself some trouble."

"How?"

"Open up your game."

"Who are you?"

"It matters not who I am; but it will save you trouble to open up."

"I've nothing to open up."

"That is not your baggage in the cab."

"Yes, it is my baggage."

"What are you doing with female apparel?"

"I have no female apparel."

"Well, old man, we'll see that you tell the truth in good season."

"Where are you taking me?"

"Before a judge."

"See here, my friend, you can make some money."

"I can?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"Let me go."

"How can I make some money that way?"

"I will pay you."

"How much?"

"Twenty pounds."

"You will pay me twenty pounds to let you go?"

"Yes."

"And you claim to be an innocent man?"

"I do."

"Why do you pay the money?"

"To save bother and time."

"I'll take the money."

"And let me go?"

"Yes."

The money was passed over, and the man disappeared; but the detective was up to his business. He saw a newsboy, to whom he beckoned. The boy approached, and the detective said:

"Halloo, Mike!"

"Halloo yourself! What do you want?"

"I want to give you a chance to make two dollars."

"I'm your man."

"Here is one dollar."

"You're good pay."

"I'll give you the other when I see you again."

"What do you want me to do?"

"You see that foreigner there?"

"You bet."

"Follow him, see where he goes, and then come back to this corner."

"I see your game."

"When you come back, I'll give you two dollars, and if you fail me I'll hunt you up and throw you in the dock."

"You will, eh?"

"I will."

"No need; I'll follow your man."

"Go it."

The detective hastened to the place where he had directed the driver of the cab to await him. The man was there and had all the baggage. Ranleigh jumped into the cab and told the fellow where to drive, and when he reached his destination he had him transfer the baggage to another cab.

"See here, Johnny," said the officer, "here's your money, and I'll see you do not get into any trouble."

Ranleigh gave the man thirty dollars, and, with the baggage, was driven in the other cab to his own rooms. The baggage was put away, and the officer came upon the street and proceeded to the point where he had agreed to meet the boy. The lad was waiting for him.

"You're here, lad?"

"I'm here."

"Well, what did you learn?"

"I reckon the man you set me to follow is crazy."

"You think he's crazy, eh?"

"Yes."

"What makes you think so?"

"Well, he went to the corner of Greenwich and — Streets, and there he looked and looked, and seemed dazed, and then commenced to ask questions."

"What was it he asking?"

"He was asking if any one had seen a cab."

"Did he find the cab?"

"No."

"What did he do?"

"He went to a hotel on Fourth Avenue."

"What hotel?"

The lad designated the hotel, and received his two dollars. He was a genuine little city gamin, and received his money and asked no questions.

Ranleigh changed his garb and started for the hotel.

He reached the latter just in time to see his man come forth, and he fell to the fellow's trail. The man proceeded direct to police head-quarters, and asked for a detective, and a man was assigned to hear his story.

He told the tale of the lost baggage, but our hero was near by and overheard enough to understand what the fellow was talking about.

"Well," said the officer, when he had heard the story, "that's one of the dodges."

"What sort of dodge would you call it, sir?"

"You have been 'bilked' out of your baggage."

"But the man who arrested me was an officer."

"An officer?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"He had a badge."

The detective laughed, and said:

"A milk badge, I reckon."

The officer commenced to question the man closely concerning the cab and the driver, and went particularly into the appearance of the fellow who personated an officer.

"It's all right," he said.

"Can you recover the baggage?"

"Yes, sir."

The man hesitated a moment, and then said:

"I feel very much mortified."

"At being beat so nicely?"

"Yes; and I will give you a hundred pounds if you return the baggage in such a manner as to avoid all notoriety."

The detective fixed his keen eyes on the man, and asked:

"You want to prosecute the thief, I suppose?"

"No; all I want is the baggage."

The man went away, agreeing to meet the detective on the following morning, and the next moment our hero slapped his colleague on the shoulder, and said:

"Well, Tom, what racket are you up to now?"

The detective told the circumstances, and Ranleigh said:

"I can save you all trouble."

"Eh? You've got the baggage?"

"Yes."

"And the thief?"

"I'm the thief."

"Eh? What do you mean?"

Our hero made certain explanations, and the two officers came to a perfect understanding.

The chances were very much against the man's finding the baggage until Ranleigh saw fit to return it. Meantime, the latter started for the hotel, and now he was anxious to learn what had become of the girl.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE man went direct back to the hotel, and our hero saw him enter, and was close enough when the fellow stopped at the office to overhear what he said. The man ascended to his room, and the detective approached the clerk and satisfied the latter as to his identity, and then asked:

"Who is that man who just spoke to you?"

"He is an Irish gentleman."

"What is his name?"

"He is registered as Henry Moreland, Dublin."

"When did he come here?"

"Last night."

"Alone?"

"No."

"Who was with him?"

"A young lady."

"Can you describe her appearance?"

"No; she was closely veiled."

"How do you know she was young?"

"She is registered as his daughter."

"She is in the house now?"

"No."

"She is not here?"

"No."

"Where is she?"

"That I can't tell. All I know is that this morning her father surrendered her room and said his daughter had gone with a friend to Boston."

"Did you see the friend?"

"I did not. I was not on duty."

"Did any of your men see the lady go away with a friend?"

"I do not know; but here comes the clerk who was on duty; you can question him."

The clerk did not remember having seen a friend, nor did he see the girl go away.

"You are sure she is gone?"

"Her room is vacated."

"And no one saw her go?"

"No."

"Have you questioned the chamber-maid?"

"No."

"Will you take me up and introduce me to the maid who was on duty on that floor?"

"I will."

"You need not introduce me, just point her out to me," said the detective, as the two ascended the stairs.

On the second floor was a bright-looking maid, and the clerk said:

"There is the girl. The guest occupied Room 30."

The detective approached the girl and the clerk returned downstairs.

"Come here, Bridget," said the officer; and he stepped toward a vacant room, the door of which was open.

"What do you want, sir?"

"A word or two with you."

"See here, ye can't come none of yer nonsense wid me!"

"Just come here a moment. You had charge of Room 30?"

The girl turned pale.

"Aha!" thought the detective, "I see it all."

"Come here, Bridget."

"No, sir; I'll not come."

"Yes, you will."

The girl started to go away. The detective sprang forward and seized hold of her. She said:

"Let go your hold, or I'll scream."

"If you do I'll arrest you."

The girl turned pale.

"I mean business, Bridget."

"Are you an officer?"

"I am an officer."

"And what do you want wid me?"

"I wish to ask you a few questions."

The girl suffered herself to be led into the room, and the detective closed the door after him.

"Now, Bridget," he said, "will you tell me the truth?"

"I'll tell ye the truth if I've anythin' to tell ye, sir."

"You had charge of No. 30?"

"I did, sir."

"You saw the young lady after she went into her room last night?"

"I did, sir."

"She was a handsome girl?"

"She wer', sir."

"Had dark auburn hair?"

"Indade she did, sir—genuine Irish auburn hair."

"And blue eyes?"

"She did, sir—the loveliest blue eyes I ever see in a human head."

"She appeared very nervous and frightened?"

"She did, sir."

"What did she say to you?"

"Divil a word."

"She said something?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Did she not ask you some questions?"

"Divil a word."

"Did she go down to eat?"

"No, sir; it wer' late when they came here."

"Did she go down to her breakfast?"

"I don't know, sir."

"You don't know?"

"I do not."

"You made up the room this morning?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did she say to you this morning?"

The girl did not answer.

"Bridget, you will keep out of trouble if you answer my questions."

"I've told you all, sir."

The detective could see that the girl had not told him all.

"Bridget, I will give you twenty dollars to tell me the truth."

"What does it all mean, sir?"

"Tell me what you know, and I will tell you what it all means."

"Shure, I've nothing to tell, sir."

"Remember, I will pay you twenty dollars."

The girl looked around in a furtive manner, and again repeated her question:

"What does it all mean, sir?"
 "Will you tell me what you know?"
 "I will, sir."
 "You saw the girl this morning; what did she say?"
 "I did not see her this morning, sir," answered the girl in a low, frightened tone.
 "You did not see her this morning?"
 "No, sir."
 "How is that?"
 "She disappeared, sir, during the night."
 The detective was perfectly cool as he repeated:
 "She disappeared during the night?"
 "Yes."
 "How do you know?"
 "She was not in her room when I went there this morning."
 "She was not in her room?"
 "No, sir."
 "But how do you know she went away during the night?"
 "She must have gone during the night."
 "What makes you think so?"
 The girl once again looked around in a furtive manner, and then said:
 "The bed-clothes were not mussed, sir, at all."

CHAPTER IX.

"THE girl had not retired at all?"
 "No, sir."
 "You are sure about that?"
 "I am, sir."
 "Did you report the circumstance at the office?"
 The girl turned very pale, and trembled violently.
 "Answer."
 "Oh, I feared trouble would come of it, sir. I never did the like before in all my life."
 "What did you do?"
 "I concealed the fact, sir."
 "Why did you do it?"
 "Oh, sir, I must not tell."
 "You must."
 "I know I did wrong, but I believed the gentleman her father."
 "What did he tell you?"
 "Oh, sir, I ought not repeat it, sir, since I received his gold sovereign."
 "You must tell me all, Bridget."
 "I can't, sir."
 "If you do not I shall arrest you."
 "You will arrest me?"
 "I will."
 "Shure, I must tell all?"
 "You must."
 "Well, sir, when I was in the room and much surprised to see the bed had not been occupied, the girl's father came in the room. He was very pale, sir, and I could see, very much excited, and he said to me:
 "Ah, my daughter is not here?"
 "I said, 'No, sir; where is she?' and he said:
 "A friend took her away last night—a friend of ours who lives in Boston."
 "Well, sir, I looked at him, and he said:
 "What is your name?"
 "Says I, 'Me name is Bridget, and says he: 'Well, Bridget, I'll tell you I do not want any one to know my daughter went away last night; it might appear strange; and if any one asks you about it, say she went away this morning, and here's a sovereign for you.'"
 The detective listened attentively, and odd thoughts were passing through his mind.
 "Well, sir, I did not know what to do," continued the girl; "but the gentleman said it was her father, and I promised not to say anything about it; but since then, when I've had time to think it over, it has appeared more and more strange to me."
 "Bridget, what more did the man say?"
 "Nothing, sir."
 "You say he looked pale and excited."
 "Yes, sir."
 "But he knew she had gone?"
 "Of course, sir, he did."
 "Well, now, Bridget, you did wrong."
 "I did, sir."
 "And there is only one way that you can make it right."
 "I'll do anything, sir."
 "You must not tell the gentleman you talked with me."
 "I will not, sir."
 "You must not let him know there has been any inquiry about the girl."
 "I will not, sir."
 "If he asks you if there has been any inquiry, you must say 'no.' For, remember, there has not been, on the part of the hotel people."
 "That is so, sir."
 "I can rely upon you?"
 "You can, sir."
 "If you do tell the man, I shall know it."
 "I'll never say a word, sir."
 "It will be bad for you if you do."
 "Faith, sir, I'd rather be quiet about it than otherwise."
 "And it will be better for you."
 "But what does it all mane, sir?"

"I can not tell you now. But answer me: how did the girl act when you saw her last night?"
 "She appeared very much frightened, sir, and uneasy."
 "Did you see her and the gentleman together?"
 "I did not, sir."
 "Was he in her room, to your knowledge?"
 "Not to my knowledge, sir; but I saw them talking together for a long time in the hall."
 "Did she call him father?"
 "I did not hear what was said, sir."
 "Did she speak of him as her father while you were in her room last night?"
 "She did not, sir. I tell ye she did not say three words to me, I saw that she was not inclined to talk, and I let her alone."
 "Well, now, remember, not one word of what has passed between you and me, or it will be the worst for you."
 "I'm mum, sir."
 The detective paid the girl some money, and left the room. He descended the stairs and waited until well on in the afternoon, when the man Moreland came down to the bar, and later on took a paper and sat down to read. The detective took a seat near him. Our hero was got up as a respectable-looking elderly man.
 A few moments passed, and Mr. Moreland said:
 "It's fine weather you have in this country?"
 "Fine weather for honest men," came the singular answer, with a tinge of brogue.
 "You're an Irishman, sir?"
 "I am."
 "Have you been long in this country?"
 "Twenty years."
 "From what part of Ireland did you come?"
 "From Cork, sir."
 "I am an Irishman myself."
 "Ah! and I wouldn't have believed it."
 "Yes, I am an Irishman."
 "I saw you when you arrived last night," said Ranleigh.
 "Yes; I came over on the —"
 "Were you sick on the passage?"
 "No, sir."
 "And was your wife?"
 "My wife?"
 "Shure, I saw a lady with you when you came last night. I thought it was your wife."
 "It was my daughter."
 "Ah! your daughter?"
 "Yes."
 "I've not seen her to-day. She is not well?"
 "Yes, she is well; but she has gone away."
 "Do you intend remaining in New York?"
 "I do."
 "Did you get your baggage?"
 "What baggage?"
 "I thought I heard you telling some one you had lost your baggage."
 "It's strange, sir. I did lose my baggage; but I do not remember speaking about it."
 "Well, I must have heard you speak about it or I should not have known it. Your daughter went away last night after midnight, I think I heard you say?"
 Mr. Moreland gazed in a surprised manner, and answered:
 "I do not remember saying anything of the kind."
 "It's strange I should say so if I had not heard you make the statement."
 Mr. Moreland studied the face of the old gentleman who appeared to know so much of his affairs; but there was nothing in his appearance to arouse suspicion.
 Mr. Moreland did not remain long in the bar-room, and after he had gone away, the detective proceeded to his own home. He made up his mind to go through the baggage and learn if there was anything to be discovered. He did so, and indeed made a most remarkable discovery.

CHAPTER X.

THE opening of a trunk was a simple matter for a man like Ranleigh, and when it was open he calmly set to examine its contents. He found some rich female attire, some jewels of rare value and antique style, proving them to be family heir-looms. He also discovered a photograph of a mere youth, and in a recess in the trunk he found a parcel of papers, and among them a will.
 "Well, well," he muttered, as he unfolded and glanced over the articles, "this is a curious find!"
 The detective's mind meantime was busy. His whole theory was suddenly changed. He had at first concluded, after the disappearance of the girl, that she was a confederate of the decrepit old man on the steamer, but his discoveries in the trunk changed his suspicions into another channel.
 Later on he found a little book, and upon opening it he saw the inscription "My Diary," and in looking over the diary found a connected narrative which opened up to him a wide field for speculation.
 From the diary he learned the following facts:
 George Treadwell was the youngest son of a landed proprietor, and at his father's death found himself comparatively penniless. He was married and had two children, and, owing to certain family differences, was estranged from his eldest brother; and the next eldest brother, from selfish motives, sided with the head of the family. George Treadwell became a clerk in the city of Dublin, and was only able to provide in a moderate manner for his family, consisting of a wife, a son and daughter.

George Treadwell in due time died, and his wife shortly afterward followed him to the grave, leaving two comparatively helpless orphans.

The daughter was adopted by a maternal relative, and the son, a lad of fourteen, was sent to America, to be cared for by another maternal relative.

Four years subsequent to the death of George Treadwell, his two elder brothers were drowned while on a yachting excursion. The eldest brother was a bachelor, and the younger one had no children, as his only son, who would have been the heir, died just a few months before his father's death.

After the death of the two brothers, young Philip Treadwell, the son of George Treadwell, became the heir at law to the estate; and later on it was learned that Henry Treadwell, the next elder brother of George, upon the death of his own son, had made a provisional will, bequeathing his own small estate and large personal property to Philip Treadwell; or in case of his death, the property was to go to a cousin of the Treadwells, who also became heir at law to the original estate of the Treadwells—a most valuable property.

Margaret Treadwell, the daughter of George and sister of Philip, surreptitiously became possessed of the will of Henry Treadwell, the document having been brought to her by an old family servant who had always remembered and loved her father George, the youngest son.

Upon receiving the will she determined to discover her brother Philip, from whom she had not heard in several years. She went to a solicitor, and he communicated with the American relatives, or rather, their representatives, only to learn that they were dead, and no one knew what had become of the son.

Meantime, the cousin, one Francis Browne, had claimed the estate, and had entered into possession, he having furnished proofs of the death of Philip Treadwell.

Later on this Francis Browne discovered that Margaret was making efforts to discover the whereabouts of her brother, and that she possessed the only proofs of his identity.

One day the girl received a secret warning to look out for herself, as Francis Browne had formed a conspiracy to kidnap her in order to prevent her further search for the discovery of her brother.

A few evenings later the girl's life was attempted. An assassin ran up behind her when returning from church and sought to stab her to death. Fortunately the knife-blade was diverted, and she received only a slight wound, and the would-be assassin escaped.

Upon another occasion, while sitting at the window of her residence, a bullet crashed through a pane of glass near where she was sitting, and thus a second time her life was attempted.

The girl became thoroughly alarmed. She was satisfied that she would be murdered. She communicated with the police authorities, and detectives were put upon the case; but the officers never succeeded in tracing out the author of the two murderous attempts upon the girl's life.

Some weeks passed, and an attempt was made to kidnap her; but again she was almost providentially saved—rescued at the last moment; and still the detectives were baffled.

The girl did not dare tell she suspected that Francis Browne was the instigator of these attempts upon her life.

One day she received a mysterious note, which ran as follows:

"If you remain in Ireland your life will be sacrificed. Flee to America and find your brother, and he will protect you.

"A FRIEND."

The girl was shrewd enough to determine that the secret misadventure was sent by an enemy; that it was a trap they were preparing to get her on the sea to murder her. But the note contained also a suggestion.

She resolved to go to America and find her brother if he were alive, but she resolved at the same time to go secretly, and thus escape her enemies.

In order to carry out her scheme, she let it be known that she intended to go to England. She knew that she was closely watched, and that all her plans, if discovered, would be reported.

In the meantime she was secretly arranging for a trip to America. She managed to send small packages by express to Cork, intending, when all her goods were there, to go on secretly, buy a trunk in that city, and take the steamer at Queenstown as an emigrant passenger.

Her scheme worked well, and on the day she proposed proceeding to Cork, she pretended to visit a friend in the suburbs of Dublin, where she went, having previously provided a disguise at another place.

When night came she stole forth from the home of her friend just at the moment when she was expected to appear at the dinner-table. She proceeded to a mere near by and left a portion of her clothing, so as to make it appear that she had committed suicide; and we will here say that when the mere was dragged it was believed that such had been her fate. Instead, however, the girl proceeded to her relay house, assumed her disguise, intercepted the train to Cork, and while her friends were searching for her in the lake, she was proceeding by train to the latter city.

Arrived in Cork, she engaged a passage after having gathered all her packages into a trunk, and a few days later was safely put on board the steamer, and no incident occurred of moment until the time when the American detective warned her of danger.

The girl had kept a complete diary of all her doings, and from it Ranleigh extracted the above facts, and he was convinced that the girl he had met on the steamer was Margaret Treadwell. As he turned over the book he came to fresh entries which led him to discover why she had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared.

CHAPTER XI.

In the diary Ranleigh read several records concerning himself—evidently entries made during the course of his brief acquaintance with the young lady. They were in the form of self-inquiries and answers, and as her opinions were gradually formed, her musings were put in writing.

The first entry appeared to have been made immediately after his first interview with her, and the written query was:

"Who can this man be? Is he a friend or a foe?"

Later on the answers were given:

"I fear this man. I do not believe his story. I will avoid him. I believe he is an enemy. My foes have been so stealthy, I must be aware."

But still there came, later, inquiries which were practically enigmas.

"Which of the two is my friend—the American, or this Mr. —? What has become of the old man who was watching me? His disappearance is strange. Is he not in league with the officer? I think my safest course is to avoid the American. Mr. M— appears, after all, to be my real friend. I will put myself under his guidance. He promises to save me from both my enemies—from them all. I will trust him."

There were no more entries, and Ranleigh sat musing over the meaning of what he had read, and at length said:

"I see it all. Yes, yes, she is an honest girl and she has been made a victim by that wretch Moreland. The man was under a disguise as the decrepit old fellow. He has removed his disguise, appeared to the girl as a friend, has convinced her that I was leagued with her enemies, and has induced her to place herself under his protection. He managed to conceal her on the boat, and finally succeeded in taking her off the steamer. She has gone with him willingly. He took her to the hotel, and she disappeared. And now the question arises: did that villain dispose of her, or did she become suspicious of him and escape? Be it either way, her baggage, the will, and her secret are in my possession, and there they will remain until I find her, her brother, or some of her relatives. In the meantime, I must get on to the track of this man Moreland."

On the following day our hero went to police head-quarters and put himself in communication with the detective whom Moreland had engaged to recover the baggage. He had little difficulty in arranging with his *confrère*, and the two went to the hotel where Moreland was stopping. The man was summoned down to the bar, and Johnson, our hero's friend, introduced the latter under the following circumstances. He said:

"Mr. Moreland, I am called away on a special job, and I have brought to you Mr. Hunter, one of our best detectives. I think this gentleman can aid you in finding your baggage much better than I can."

Our hero was got up under a sure disguise, and he said in a confident tone:

"I am sure I can recover the baggage."

Mr. Moreland looked him all over, and said:

"I will pay a good reward to recover the trunks and hand-satchels."

"I can recover them if you give me the points, sir."

"I will leave you two to talk matters over; I must go."

Johnson went away and Mr. Moreland and our hero were left alone. The latter had a game to play, and he assumed a certain rôle. He knew that Moreland was a villain, and he determined to let it appear that he also was a little careless as far as genuine honesty went. It was his idea that Moreland would in the end have more use for a dishonest man than an honest one.

"So you think you can find the trunks?"

"Yes, I do."

"Do you know the circumstances under which they were stolen?"

"No."

Mr. Moreland told his story, and after a few moments' thoughtfulness, our hero said:

"Do you know any one who would have a motive in stealing the baggage?"

"Why do you ask?"

"I'll tell you; it looks like a put-up job to me. The cabman was in the game."

"What makes you think so?"

"The man who arrested you was a bogus officer. He took you away a short distance and then freed you, and you hastened back to where you had left the cabman, and he was gone."

"Yes; he must have been in with the thief."

"Can you describe the cabman?"

"I can."

"Do so."

Mr. Moreland gave a pretty accurate description of the cabman, and when he had concluded, Ranleigh said:

"I know that fellow."

"The cabman?"

"Yes. And now, will you describe the bogus officer?"

Mr. Moreland described Ranleigh as the latter appeared when working the game.

"I can place him," said the officer; "but I've got the cabman down. I will see you to-night, and I will have something to tell you."

Our hero went away, seemingly; but, in fact, he merely transformed, and fell to a lay on Moreland's track. He followed the man around all day, and was with him down in Wall Street, when a really startling incident broke the monotony of the trail.

Among the contents of one of Mr. Moreland's trunks was a photograph of a young man; and while Ranleigh was piping Moreland, the latter suddenly—and, as it afterward proved, unexpectedly

and accidentally—encountered a young man. Moreland appeared to be taken all aback, and started to trail the young fellow.

Ranleagh also was taken all aback, and at once discerned the cause of Moreland's sudden interest—the youth was the living original of the photograph the detective had found in the trunk.

Moreland followed the young man around for some time, when suddenly the youth most mysteriously disappeared. He evaded the vigilance of both Moreland and our hero.

Ranleagh dropped his trail on Moreland and started to find the youth, but was baffled. He spent the balance of the day seeking to catch on to the trail, but did not catch sight of the youth again; and when at length compelled to give over the chase for the time being, he muttered:

"Well, this gets me dead! The young fellow was Philip Treadwell, the heir, and I never saw mortal man such a picture of a picture!"

It was night when Ranleagh went to Moreland's hotel. He found his man in the reading-room waiting for him. The detective had changed back to his disguise as Hunter. He entered and took a seat alongside of Moreland.

"What luck?" asked the latter.

"I'm on the trail, I think."

"Eh? That's good!"

"Yes, I think I'm on the right trail."

"Have you found the cabby?"

"I've found the cabby."

"Any news of the baggage?"

"That depends."

"On what?"

"Well, I'll tell you, sir. If it was a lady's baggage you lost, I'm right."

Moreland showed considerable excitement, and for a moment was thrown a little off his guard. He looked sharply at Hunter, and asked:

"What difference does it make?"

"I will know whether I am on the right lay."

"Explain."

"If it was a lady's baggage you lost, I've found it."

"Well, it was a lady's baggage—my daughter's traps."

"Then we're all right, sir."

CHAPTER XII.

"You will recover the baggage?" said Moreland.

"I have as good as recovered it."

"With all the contents of the trunks intact?"

"Yes, sir."

"When you deliver the baggage to me I will pay you twenty pounds, a hundred dollars in American money."

"I will have the baggage here, sir, if I have good luck, this very night."

Moreland appeared greatly pleased, and said:

"Your money will be ready for you, and I may have another job for you."

"All right, sir. I will be here at ten o'clock."

Our hero had arranged to deliver the trunks, but he had removed everything that would be of advantage to the villain Moreland.

At ten o'clock he was on hand, and had the trunks with him. The latter were carried up to Moreland's room. The detective was paid, and the man said:

"Will you come here in the morning?"

"At what hour?"

"Early."

"I will be here, sir."

Moreland went to his room. Our hero worked a change and entered the room adjoining Moreland's.

Ranleagh had secured the room under a certain disguise. In fact, the fellow had a dozen changes at command, and his transformations were not only quickly made, but were perfect and complete.

He got up into his room and down to a little point of observation which he had arranged while Moreland was absent.

He saw the man go for the trunks. He had no key, and was compelled to burst them open. With wild eagerness he went through their contents, and as he proceeded a shadow settled upon his face.

"Hang it!" he exclaimed. "There's nothing here!"

Ranleagh chuckled. He knew the man would not find what he sought.

"This trunk has been opened," he said, "and I wonder whether that rascal of a detective went through it? I believe he did. I know that fellow is a rascal. I can tell rascals at a glance."

"You ought to be a good judge of villains," chuckled Ranleagh, "you are such a smart one yourself."

Ranleagh had picked up all the points he wanted for the night, and took his departure. It was midnight, but a strange impulse urged him to go on a stroll.

"I'd like," he muttered, "to come upon that young fellow again. I'll warrant you I'll never lose sight of him again!"

The detective dropped into a gambling-place—a well-known resort—advanced to the table, and lo! the first man he beheld was the youth who had eluded him in Wall Street during the day.

Our hero took up a position from whence he could study the young man's features. The lad—for he was, after all, but a mere lad in appearance—bore a striking resemblance to the photograph, and yet there was an expression upon his face which did not accord with the expression of the countenance as pictured in the *carte-de-visite*.

Ranleagh lay low for observations, and it was not long before he discovered that the youth was a reckless gambler; and later on a dire suspicion ran through our hero's mind. The young man

played too recklessly and desperately to be spending his own money honestly acquired. He could see also that the lad was being deliberately fleeced; there was a gang in the game against him.

Ranleagh waited to hear the young man called by name, and at length heard one of the players say:

"Brownie, you have had hard luck to-night."

The young man smiled grimly while awaiting a fresh shuffle of the cards. He continued to play heavily, and lost a large sum of money, and at length started to go away.

The detective followed him. The youth entered a bar-room, and drank a heavy glass of whisky, walked over to the lunch-counter, and commenced to eat. The detective thought his chance had come, and he approached the youth and said, speaking with a slight brogue:

"Halloo! as I live, Treadwell—Phil Treadwell, how are you?"

The young man turned around as cool as a cucumber, no sign of surprise in his face, and said calmly:

"You're mistaken."

"Mistaken!" ejaculated the detective.

"Yes, sir."

"This is young Phil Treadwell, of Dublin, Ireland?"

The youth laughed, and said:

"No, sir."

"But I can not be mistaken."

"You are mistaken, for I am not an Irishman; I was never in Dublin in my life."

"You were never in Dublin in your life?"

"No, sir."

"And your name is not Treadwell?"

"My name is not Treadwell."

"Where were you born, young man?"

"Here in New York. It's rather funny, sir, but I was called Treadwell once before by an Irishman from Dublin."

The young man spoke as coolly and directly as it was possible for one to speak.

"You were born in New York?"

"Yes, sir."

"Lived here all your life?"

"Yes, sir."

"And your name is—"

"Browne."

"Are your parents living?"

"No, sir."

"Any folks living who know your parents?"

"Several, sir."

"Where were your parents from?"

"Dublin."

"And you were born in New York?"

"Yes, sir."

"How long has your father been dead?"

"About five years."

"And your mother?"

"She died when I was a baby."

"Have you any relatives in this country?"

"Yes, sir; some in this city."

"Well, you will excuse me, young man, but you look as much like Philip Treadwell as it is possible for one man to look like another. Were you his twin brother the resemblance could not be greater."

"I have no brother."

"But you resemble your sister," said the detective, at a venture, and he fixed his keen eyes on the youth.

The young man laughed, and said:

"I have no sister; never had one."

There was something in the laugh that aroused our hero's suspicions.

"You have no sister?"

"No, sir."

"Well, I am sorry I am mistaken in not learning that you are Phil Treadwell."

"Why, sir?"

"Well, I had news for the young man from his sister."

"I am sorry you are disappointed, sir," said the young man, and he started to go away.

"Hold on, my friend, I've a word to say to you."

"Proceed."

"You were gambling to-night?"

"That's my own business."

"You remember seeing me at the table?"

"No, sir."

"I was there, and I made a discovery."

"Did you?"

"Yes."

"What did you discover, sir?"

"That you were losing some one's else money."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE detective expected to see the young man start and show signs of fear; but, on the contrary, he did not hesitate at all, but answered, coolly:

"You think so, eh?"

"Yes."

"That's all right; think what you choose. You make mistakes, you do. You thought my name was Phil Treadwell; but I don't care what you think."

The young man turned and walked away, and a few moments later, a man whom our hero recognized as one of the most expert criminals in New York entered the place, and advancing to the young man with whom our hero had been speaking, said in a familiar tone:

"Halloo, Brownie, you here?"

Brownie passed the man a tip, and the two left the place together. Our hero changed his rôle and followed out of the place; but when he reached the street the pair had disappeared from sight.

A moment the detective stood and considered, and at the same time he indulged in a soliloquy.

"Well," he muttered, "this gets me! That chap is Phil Treadwell as sure as I am alive! But what sort of a brother will his sister find if she ever discovers him! Alas! it may be better that she should never discover him. He is a villain. I'll follow him, and get on to him some other time," continued the officer; "I know where to find him now."

The officer was starting to go away, when there came a clutch upon his arm. He turned, and was confronted by a veiled woman.

"Who are you and what do you want?" demanded the detective.

"You are Jack Ranleagh?"

The officer started. He did not like that *any one* should penetrate his cover. He laughed, and said:

"Who put you on that lay, my dear woman?"

"Oh, I know you! I'd know you under any cover."

"Who are you?"

"Never mind who I am. I want you—want you!"

"But, madame, you are mistaken in your man."

"No, I am not mistaken in my man, Jack Ranleagh! I'm a woman—an old-timer! I'd know you anywhere."

"And you want me?"

"Yes, I want you!"

"Can't you see me to-morrow? I'm busy to-night."

"Are you busy?"

"Yes, I am."

A moment the woman appeared to think, and then she muttered:

"Maybe he's already on it!"

"On what, madame?"

"Are you piping Tally-ho?"

The detective started, and answered:

"No."

"What's your lay?"

"I can't give my business away. You ought to know that, if you are what you claim—an old-timer."

"You're right; but I've a reason for asking."

"Who are you?"

"Never mind."

Quick as a flash the detective tore the woman's veil aside and disclosed a pale, wan face—the face of a woman who had lived a fast life and who had aged early.

"Halloo, Moll, is it you?"

"Yes; I thought you knew all the time."

"I did not tumble; and what do you want?"

"Can you listen to my story?"

"Yes."

"I've been down to the MacAuley meetings, Jack."

"A good place to go, Moll."

"Yes; I've only a little time to live, Jack."

"Are you sick?"

"I've been going to pieces a long time."

"I'm sorry."

"I ain't, Jack; I'm a changed woman. I'm glad to go; but I've tumbled to one of Tally-ho's games, and I'm set to balk it."

We will here state that Tally-ho was the *sobriquet* of the criminal whom our hero had seen enter and address the young man whom he had mistaken for Phil Treadwell.

"I thought Tally-ho was your friend?"

"No more, Jack—no more. I've no friends on earth now. I've been breaking up for a long time, as I told you. I can't live much longer, and I'm set to do a little good before my light goes. I've done evil enough in my time."

"Well, what is it, Moll?"

"Tally-ho is up to one of his old tricks."

"Aha!"

"Yes; he has got a splendid young fellow under his influence, and he'll ruin the boy. Indeed, he is working him for a burglary to-night, and I do not know but it is to-night when they mean to carry out the scheme."

"Look here, Moll, what is your scheme with me?"

"I'm giving it to you straight."

A moment the detective considered. He knew the woman well. She had once been a beautiful girl. It was the old story. She had come down from the country, handsome, pure and innocent. She had entered a shop; the destroyer found her out. She became, later on, notorious as one of the most dangerous decoys in New York. Ranleagh had lost sight of her for two or three years. Upon one or two occasions he had arrested her, and once had sent her up the river. The woman had sworn away his life, as it was the only time she had been convicted. And our hero saw her upon the occasion of which we write for the first time since she had sworn to kill him.

"Moll, I have heard about you," he said, after a moment.

"Heard I had sworn to down you?"

"Yes."

"Well, I did lay for you a long time."

"You did, eh?"

"Yes; and I am glad I never met you, or I would have fixed you."

"Mebbe."

"We will not talk about that now. I tell you I am a changed woman. You never heard my history?"

"No."

"I was well reared by good, Christian parents. I became bad, as many a girl has since, and as many will in time to come—yes, as long as there are wicked men to drag innocent women down to

degradation. But now my early teaching has come back to me. I tell you I've not long to live."

"I'm sorry for you, Moll, if you are really sincere."

"I am sincere, and you need not be sorry. I am only rejoiced that I was not cut off in my career ere I had a chance to gain what I hope I have obtained—pardon from my God."

The woman spoke in a tone of deep sincerity, and the detective's suspicions were dispelled. He said:

"So Tally-ho is on a new game?"

"Yes."

"Got a young man in tow?"

"Yes."

"Who is the young man?"

"As noble a young fellow as ever lived."

"You know him?"

"Yes."

"And you say he is a noble young fellow?"

"Yes."

"How did you become acquainted with him?"

"Through Tally-ho."

"And what is Tally-ho's game?"

"The young fellow is in a large banking-house. Tally-ho made his acquaintance and got him to gambling. The young fellow is now a defaulter, and Tally-ho has persuaded him to aid in robbing the bank, telling him that his share of the swag will enable him to square up with his employers."

"And when do you think they mean to carry out the robbery?"

"To-night, I fear."

CHAPTER XIV.

"MOLL," said the detective, "how did you happen to find me? Were you looking for me?"

"No."

"You ran on me by chance?"

"Yes."

"What were you doing?"

"Piping Tally-ho."

"Did you find him?"

"Yes, when I tracked him to this place."

"Did you find his young man?"

"Yes."

"Moll, do you know the real history of that young man?"

"I only know he was a square and honorable young man until he fell under the influence of Tally-ho."

"What is his name?"

"They call him Brownie."

"Do you know him by any other name?"

"No."

"How do you know he is an honorable young man?"

"He stood between Tally-ho and me when the brute would have killed me."

"Did you ever have a talk with him?"

"Yes."

"Lately?"

"Yes."

"What did you say to him?"

"I exposed Tally-ho, and warned him."

"And what did he say?"

"He said my warning had come too late."

"But you think he is an honorable young man?"

"I do. I'll swear he was innocent until he met Tally-ho. That wretch is just cunning enough to ruin any youth."

"Tell me squarely; you believe the young man was innocent before he met Tally-ho?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"He told me the whole story."

"Will you tell it to me?"

"Not now."

"Why not?"

"There is no time to spare."

"No time to spare?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"They may be working the robbery racket at this moment."

"Have you lost sight of Tally-ho?"

"No."

"You know where he is?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"He and the young man are together."

"Together?"

"Yes."

"You know where they are?"

"I do."

"Where are they?"

"At Cronin's."

"Why did you not follow them?"

"I knew you were around."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"Who were you piping?"

"The young man."

"Brownie?"

"Yes."

"For what purpose?"

"I wished to give him a final warning."

"Why didn't you do so?"

"I had no chance."

"Why not?"

"You were on his trail."
 "Why didn't you follow them when they left here?"
 "It was too late."
 "You feared Tally-ho?"
 "Yes."
 "And you were waiting for me?"
 "Yes."
 "Moll, if you have told me the truth you have done yourself a good turn. If I discover you have lied to me, it will go hard with you. There is an old charge can be raked up against you."
 "I care not for an old charge. I am already struck with death. I may live a few days, I may die in a few hours."
 "And the men have gone to Cronin's?"
 "Yes."
 "You are sure?"
 "Yes; I heard Tally-ho say so."
 "Did he recognize me?"
 "I do not know. Were you speaking to the young man Browne?"
 "Yes."
 "Did you give anything away?"
 "I hinted that he was a defaulter."
 "Did he suspect your identity?"
 "I do not know."
 "It's strange you would not know."
 "I had gone for him on another lay."
 "Ah, I see; but he may have tumbled."
 "It is possible, after I alluded to the defalcation."
 "And would mention it to Tally-ho?"
 "Possibly."
 "Tally-ho would tumble?"
 "Possibly."
 "Then you have your cue; work it. And now listen: there is a chance to save that young man."
 "But he is a defaulter!"
 A moment Moll was silent, but at length she said:
 "I wonder if we could find out how large the defalcation is?"
 "Only from the young man."
 "Ranleagh, you are a good and true man!"
 "Thank you, Moll."
 "I've some money in the savings-bank."
 The detective was silent.
 "I have relatives, but the money would be a curse to them; it is the wages of sin."
 "What are you getting at, Moll?"
 "I never had an idea of giving the money to my relatives."
 "What will you do with it?"
 "Make good the young man's defalcation."
 "Why do you do this?"
 "It is the best thing I can do with the money."
 "What makes you think so?"
 "I know the young man is worth saving. I know that he is naturally true, and pure, and noble. He has confessed all to me. He risked his life for me."
 "And you wish to save him?"
 "I do."
 "What is your plan?"
 "You find him; get from him his story; learn the amount he is behind; then come to me and I will furnish the money to make good the account."
 "It may amount to some thousands."
 "I can pay some thousands."
 "Where will I see you, Moll?"
 "Meet me here to-morrow morning."
 "You may die?"
 "If I do there will be a messenger here with papers for you."
 "You have fully considered, Moll?"
 "I have fully considered. I can do no better with the money. I tell you, I would never give it to any of my family, even though they were poor; but they are all in comfortable circumstances; they do not need the money."
 "I will meet you in the morning at Bradley's."
 "All right; let it be Bradley's. And now, one word: the young man must not know where the money comes from."
 "All right, Moll, poor girl! I always knew you possessed a good heart, and several times I was easy on you."
 "Ranleagh, I will tell you something I never told to mortal soul yet. I have snatched three girls and two boys from the streets. I have educated them, and they are in a fair way to become good women and good men. One of the boys is a young lawyer rising in his profession. And they do not know who their secret benefactor really is."
 "This is a strange story, Moll."
 "It is true. But now you go to Cronin's. Save that young man at all hazards."
 At this moment there followed an old-time New York scene.

CHAPTER XV.

A POLICEMAN came sauntering down the street. He arrived opposite to where Ranleagh and the woman were talking, when he advanced and seizing hold of the poor creature roughly, raised his club and said:
 "Come, you hussy, you move on now or I'll split you!"
 The detective said, as the woman cowered under the threatened stroke:
 "This lady is talking to me, officer. She is all right."
 "None of your lip, or I'll give it to you now. You move on!"
 "Just wait a moment, officer, and I will explain things."
 "Oh, I don't want any explanations or any of your lip."
 —readers will remember the detective was in disguise.

"If you will listen a moment, I'll tell you how matters stand."
 "Move on, I say!"
 "You're too fresh altogether," said Ranleagh.
 "Eh? What's that?" Then the officer made a rush, and lifting his club over the detective's head, said:
 "You move on, or I'll take you in!"
 "No, you won't take me in. You don't know your duty."
 "I don't, eh?"
 "No."
 "Take that!"
 The officer attempted to bring down his club, but there came no response.
 "You take that!" and at the same instant the too previous policeman received a clip which knocked him reeling. He gathered himself up and drew a pistol, when Ranleagh also drew one, and leveling it, said:
 "Now look out, you fool, or you go down!"
 The policeman made a move as though to rap for assistance, when our hero threw back the lapel of his coat and showed his badge, at the same instant exclaiming:
 "See here, old man!"
 The policeman glanced, and his eyes started.
 "You're a pretty man to be sent around with a club."
 "I beg your pardon," said the policeman.
 "Oh, you needn't beg my pardon; and I'd serve you right to take you in or have your uniform stripped off; but this may prove a lesson to you. And now you move on, and consider yourself lucky. I won't even ask your number."
 The policeman slunk away, and the detective, turning to the woman, said:
 "I'll walk with you to the corner, Moll."
 "You need not fear for me. You go to Cronin's."
 "Well, good-night."
 The two separated; the woman moved away in one direction and the detective in another.
 When an opportunity offered, Ranleagh worked a change and proceeded to Cronin's.
 The latter was a man suspected of keeping a fence. He was a notorious villain, and kept a house where criminals of all sorts were known to congregate.
 It was long after midnight when our hero entered the place. He was well known to Cronin; indeed, the fellow had good reason to fear him; but, as it chanced, Cronin was not in his place at the time, and our hero was under cover.
 There was nothing unusual in the detective's entering the place at that hour, as occasionally strangers dropped in merely to take a look at the den; and as they always spent some money, they were welcome.
 Our hero espied Tally-ho, Brownie, and two other men holding a consultation, and he awaited his chance.
 The party soon advanced to the bar to take a drink.
 The detective was satisfied that no attempt would be made to rob the bank that night. The fellows, he discerned, were merely arranging their plans.
 When the party came up to drink, our hero, who was got up as a plain mechanic, or laborer, exclaimed, addressing Browne:
 "Halloo, Treadwell, me darlin', how are ye?"
 The young man fixed his eyes on the detective and answered, as he had before:
 "You're mistaken, sir. My name is not Treadwell."
 The detective could see, when he made his second assault, that the young man was a little agitated.
 "You're not Phil Treadwell, eh?"
 "No, sir."
 "Well, I don't know what r'ason ye hev for denyin' yer identity, unless it is yer ashamed of the company yer in, but I'll swear ye are Phil Treadwell."
 "Who is this duck, Brownie?" said Tally-ho.
 "I don't know who he is."
 "Well, I know you well enough, my boy, and it's ashamed I am to see ye in such company."
 Tally-ho stepped forward and demanded:
 "What objection have you to the company?"
 "Well, I'm thinking the young man might find more select company—yes, I do."
 "Who are you, anyhow?"
 "Well, that's my business."
 "Do you know this young man?"
 "I do, well."
 "He says he never saw you before."
 "Well, I know him well enough."
 "You're mistaken."
 "I'm not."
 "I'll ask a favor of you, my friend."
 "Will you, now?"
 "Mind your own business and get out of here."
 "Are you the proprietor here?"
 "Never mind who I am."
 "Shure, I know who ye are well enough, and that's why I spoke of the company the young man was in."
 "You know me?"
 "Yes, I do."
 "Who am I?"
 "Well, they call you, for short, Tally-ho, but if ye had yer desserts you'd be where ye couldn't sing 'Tally-ho' any more for a season. Do you mind that, now?"
 "And will you take that, now?"
 Tally-ho made a stroke at Ranleagh; the detective, for reasons, had deliberately provoked a row, and he warded off the blow intended for him, and dealt one in return that sent Tally-ho spinning;

and when one of the other men leaped in for a stroke he, too, was knocked over as easily as though he had been a clothes-pin.

Tally-ho regained his feet. The man was considerable of a boxer; indeed, he understood the game well enough to understand when he was overmatched.

"Come on, me friend! Ye wer' talkin' so loud a moment ago, I'll give ye all ye want," and Ranleigh danced around like a Comanche Indian, yelling and whooping, until a policeman ran in and, as usual, seized hold of a quiet and inoffensive man. He seized hold of Browne.

The youth offered no resistance. As the policeman sought to drag him off, Tally-ho, however, ran forward, exclaiming:

"Hold on! That young fellow took no part in the row."

Ranleigh struck Tally-ho another blow, and Browne was dragged out.

For once the policeman knew his duty. It was a put-up job on the part of Ranleigh, who had arranged for the whole little affair, and he kept Tally-ho and his friends busy while the officer led the young man off, ostensibly to the station-house; but he merely marched him around the block.

Meantime, Ranleigh had made a rush from the place, and he knew just where to go to find the officer and the prisoner. He came upon them, and said:

"See here, officer, don't be takin' that lad in. Shure, he had no hand in the row."

It was a neat game the detective was playing.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Do you say the young man had no hand in the fight?"

"I do."

"Well, you're late saying it."

"Faith, I wer' busy at the toime."

"I'll take him in anyhow."

The young man made no protest and said not a word.

"You will not take him in."

"I will. What have you to say about it?"

"He had nothing to do with the fight."

"You can tell that to the sergeant."

"I'm tellin' it to you."

"The young man is drunk, anyhow."

"He's not."

"Yes, he is."

"Well, now, lave him to me an' I'll take him."

"You will?"

"I will."

"Can I depend upon you?"

"Ye can."

"Well, I don't mind, if you will take him home."

"I will, shure."

The policeman released his hold upon the youth, and Ranleigh seized his arm, and said:

"Come along, now, an' shure I'll let ye go presently."

The latter statement was whispered in the young man's ear.

The two walked away a short distance, when Ranleigh asked:

"Where do you live?"

"I won't go home to-night."

"Why not?"

"It's too late. I'll go to a hotel. I could not get in at my boarding-house without arousing every one."

"And ye will go to a hotel? Now, see here, ye will come along wid me."

"Who are you?"

"I'm a friend of yours."

"I never remember having seen you before."

"You did, though."

The detective had dropped the brogue. The young man showed signs of trepidation, and after a moment said:

"You are an officer?"

"Yes, I am an officer."

"A detective?"

"Yes, I am a detective."

The young man was perfectly cool at once, and said in a firm voice:

"I expected it, and I don't care."

"You don't care, eh?"

"I do not. So they have discovered things at the office?"

"No, sir, they have not discovered your defalcation."

"They have not?"

"No."

"Then who ordered my arrest?"

"You are not under arrest."

"Did you not say you were a detective?"

"I am."

"And am I not under arrest?"

"No."

"You are the man who spoke to me early in the evening?"

"Yes; the man to whom you told the lies."

"What lies?"

"When you said your name was Browne, and you were born in New York."

"My name is Browne, and I was born in New York."

"You stick to that, eh?"

"I must stick to the truth."

"We will not talk about that now. Will you come to my rooms?"

"I will have to go wherever you take me."

"No; you need not come unless you desire it."

"I am free to go where I choose?"

"Ye."

"You have no warrant for me?"

"No; but let me tell you, if you come with me you are all right, you will be saved. If you do not come with me, you go to ruin."

"I am already ruined."

"Not yet."

"I am."

"No, you are not."

"You do not know all."

"Yes, I do."

"What do you know?"

"I know you have been using the money of your employers, and I know who got you to do it."

"Who?"

"Tally-ho."

"Do you know the amount I have taken?"

"No; but I know this: Tally-ho is seeking to induce you to rob the firm. He wants you to enter into a burglary scheme."

The young man did not appear to exhibit any surprise as he said:

"You appear to have matters down pretty fine."

"Yes, I have. Now let me tell you something more. You will not gain anything by robbing the concern. Tally-ho will not give you the money to straighten up your accounts. He will slump you off at the last moment, and drag all the consequences of both crimes on you."

"I have been looking for such a result."

"And still you go ahead?"

"No."

"Have you not agreed to aid in the robbery?"

"No. They have been seeking to persuade me to do so."

"And you have refused?"

"Yes."

"But how about the defalcation?"

"That will be known soon."

"It will?"

"Yes; Tally-ho has threatened to see my employers."

"And what are you going to do about it, young man?"

"Nothing."

A suspicion flashed over our hero's mind. He suddenly discovered whence came all the youth's coolness and indifference.

"You do not care about an exposure?"

"It's too late to care."

"But the disgrace to your name?"

The young man said nothing.

"What will your noble relatives in Ireland say—your sister?"

"She will not know it."

The detective had at length driven the young man to an admission. The latter saw the mistake he had made, and was going to rectify it, when the detective said:

"That's all right, Phil Treadwell; I had the facts down before you confessed."

"I've confessed nothing."

"It was not necessary that you should; you can not escape the disgrace to your friends by taking your own life."

The young man broke up.

"You see I know what I am talking about. And now listen to me; you can be saved."

"Saved?"

"Yes, saved from disgrace—from the need of doing anything rash."

"Who will save me?"

"I will."

"You?"

"Yes."

"Why will you save me?"

"I will explain in good time—not now. But tell me, how much do you owe to your employers?"

The youth did not answer.

"Answer me, Phil."

"A large sum."

"How large a sum?"

"I tremble to think how much."

"You need not tremble to tell me."

The youth was answering to the name of Phil.

"Thousands of dollars."

"How many thousands?"

"Three."

"Is that all?"

"Yes."

"Well, you need not fear. Make a clean breast of everything to me, and you will be all right. I am your friend, and I will save you."

CHAPTER XVII.

"WHAT am I to tell you?" demanded the youth.

"Your whole story," answered the detective.

"You called me Philip Treadwell?"

"Yes."

"What led you to call me by that name?"

"That is a revelation that I will make later on. You are to tell me your story."

"As I said, you are the same man who first addressed me as Treadwell in the restaurant?"

"I am."

"And you followed me?"

"I did."

"You have a purpose in following me?"

"I have."

"What is your purpose?"

"To save you."

"Why do you wish to save me?"

"Because you are Philip Treadwell."
 "I admit I am Philip Treadwell."
 "I owe you nothing for the admission; I knew who you were."
 "Will you not tell me how you came to know me, as I have not a relative in New York?"
 "I will tell you all after you tell me your story. Tell me why you deny being Philip Treadwell?"
 "Do you know anything of my previous history?"
 "I know you were born in Dublin; I know you have a sister living; and I know that when your father died you were sent to relatives in America."
 "That is true, partially; but I have no sister."
 "You have no sister?"
 "I have not."
 "Why do you still seek to deceive me?"
 "I do not desire to deceive you."
 "Then why do you deny the existence of a sister as stoutly as you denied your own identity?"
 While talking to the youth the detective had led him to his own rooms. The two entered the house, the young man offering no objection.
 Once in the house, the detective repeated the question:
 "Why do you deny the existence of a sister?"
 "She is dead."
 "Dead?"
 "Yes."
 The detective determined to let the young man believe that he could not deny the statement.
 "How do you know she is dead?"
 "I will tell you. When I reached America I was received by my relatives with great joy. They had no children. The gentleman was my great-uncle on my mother's side, and he and his wife were good, honest people, but not over well to do, although living in comfort. Their name was Browne. Shortly after my arrival in America, my uncle, Mr. Browne, received a letter announcing my sister's death."
 "And did you receive no letters from her?"
 "One written just before her death."
 "And you never answered her last letter?"
 "No."
 "Well, proceed."
 "My uncle moved out West, but after a year he and my aunt were both killed by an explosion on a lake boat, and I was left alone in the world."
 "I was at that time in the employ of the postmaster of the town where I lived. He was a defaulter, and, I learned, intended to arrange a conspiracy so as to fix the guilt upon me. I fled from the place and came to New York, and assumed the name of Browne, and I managed after awhile to secure a position in a banking-house, and I have been promoted, until now I occupy a responsible position. I was persuaded by friends one day to enter a gambling-saloon. I became fascinated with the game, and soon lost all my savings. It was about this time I met Tally-ho, and he led me on step by step, until now I am a forger to a large amount."
 "You are employed in this firm under the name of Browne?"
 "Yes, sir."
 "Why?"
 "I always feared arrest under the name of Treadwell, although I am as innocent in that matter as a child unborn."
 "You have told me the whole truth?"
 "I have."
 "If you had the money, could you make good your accounts?"
 "Yes."
 "So the firm would never know you had used any of their funds?"
 "Yes; I have carried a false balance, but the most superficial examination would reveal the deficit."
 "Then you expected you might be discovered as a defaulter?"
 "I did."
 "And you were prepared?"
 "Yes."
 "What did you mean to do?"
 The young man made no answer.
 "Tell me."
 Still the young man remained silent.
 "I am your friend; the danger is past; you need not fear; tell me."
 "I should have killed myself."
 "So I thought. Now, listen to me; I will lend you the money to make good your defalcation."
 "You will lend me the money?"
 "Yes."
 "Why should you lend me the money?"
 "That is my concern."
 "I could never pay you, or, rather, it would take years for me to save the amount."
 "You need not fear about that."
 "But why should you loan me the money?"
 "Never mind, I say."
 "I will not take it."
 "You will not take it?"
 "I will not."
 "Yes, you will."
 "I swear I will not!"
 "Why not?"
 "Because I can never pay it."
 "Suppose I show you that you can pay it?"
 "Then I will take it."
 "You will come into some money from Ireland. One of your uncles has left you money."
 "Do you know how much?"

"Enough to pay the debt."
 "You swear you are telling the truth?"
 "Your common sense should teach you that I would not throw my money away."
 "That is enough."
 "You will take it?"
 "Yes."
 "Are you under any obligations to Tally-ho?"
 The young man's eyes darted fire as he answered:
 "That man ruined me!"
 "He never did you a kindness?"
 "On the contrary, after getting me to become a defaulter, he has used the knowledge as a whip to force me into greater crimes."
 "And he has threatened to inform your employers of the defalcation?"
 "He has."
 "He is a mean sneak!"
 "He is."
 "You hate him?"
 "I do."
 "He may ruin other young men."
 "He would ruin any one."
 "And you do not like him?"
 "I do not."
 "Nor fear him?"
 "No, I do not fear him."
 "You would fear him less if your accounts were straight?"
 "I would do him some harm."
 "You can."
 "How?"
 "I will tell you. I have a scheme. Tally-ho is a bad man; he ought to be sent up, and, with your assistance, I'll get him dead to rights."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE young man's eyes glowed.
 "I would like to see him brought to justice. But now, will you keep your promise?"
 "What promise?"
 "You told me if I related my history you would tell me how you chanced to become interested in my affairs."
 "I will in good time. You must wait."
 "Why wait?"
 "Well, I have some matters to investigate; and now listen to me: Tally-ho is trying to get you to engage in a burglary?"
 "Yes."
 "Why does he need your assistance?"
 "I can point out the safe that contains the cash, and I can give him other useful information, and, besides, I know for other reasons he wishes me to become one of the burglars."
 "So do I," said the detective.
 The young man stared in amazement.
 "I do not understand."
 "I wish to catch Tally-ho."
 "Ah, I see."
 "If you go in with them I can get all the information as to their movements."
 "They do not tell me all."
 "They will be compelled to reveal a part of their plans to you after you agree to go in with them. Will you do it?"
 The young man hesitated.
 "Speak right out," said the detective.
 "How do I know that it is not a trap to catch me?"
 "I will give you the money to square your accounts. That does not look like a trap."
 "No."
 "And when you are satisfied that I am really your friend, will you enter the scheme?"
 "I will."
 "Enough; now you can go to sleep until morning; and mark you, in a few days I will make a most wonderful revelation to you."
 Upon the day following the incidents we have described, Philip Treadwell went to his business after having agreed to meet the detective at noon-time.
 At the hour named, our hero met the young man. He had, in the meantime, seen Moll, and had permitted her to advance the money. The latter was passed over to Phil. The young man's eyes filled with tears. He extended his hand to the detective, and said:
 "I would give my life for you."
 "Oh, never mind; I am your friend."
 "You are indeed my friend."
 "You will never gamble again?"
 "Never!"
 "Or drink?"
 "Never!"
 "Or keep bad company?"
 "Never!"
 "Then you may make good use of your experience. Meet me to-night at my rooms, and we will talk over our plans. Of course, you must not let Tally-ho know what has occurred."
 "I am not altogether a fool!"
 The detective smiled, and said:
 "You may not tell him in words, but your manner may betray something."
 "Ah! I see."
 "You must be careful."
 "I will."
 The detective left the youth after having given him some excel-

lent advice, and proceeded for an interview with the rascal Moreland. He sauntered into the hotel, and the first man he met was Moreland. The latter was evidently waiting for our hero.

"Ah! you are here?"
 "Yes, sir, I am here."
 "I wish to see you. Come to my room."
 The detective accompanied the man to his room.
 "See here," said Moreland, assuming a stern look, "that will not do!"
 "What will not do, sir?"
 "I am no fool."
 "No, sir; no one would take you for a fool."
 "But you are playing me for one."
 "Am I?"
 "Yes."
 "How?"
 "You will please drop your air of innocence."
 "Mr. Moreland, you will please drop your bullying air. You are talking to a gentleman."
 "I paid you for a service."
 "And I performed it."
 "No, sir!"
 "I was to recover your trunks?"
 "Yes."
 "I did."
 "But you did not recover them intact."
 "Ah, that is another matter."
 "I should say it was."
 "You will remember, sir, the trunks were in the hands of the thief some time."
 "How long were they in your hands?"
 "I will not answer a question put in such a tone."
 "You will answer to your chief."
 "Ah, you threaten me?"
 "I do."
 "Then I have nothing more to say. I will go, and you may report your matter to the chief."
 "Hold! Do not go."
 "I do not propose to remain here and be insulted."
 "Possibly what is missing can be found?"
 "You had better see the chief."
 "I owe you an apology."
 "Pay what you owe."
 "I do apologize."
 "Well, now, what is the matter? Do you desire my aid?"
 "I do."
 "Will you pay for my services?"
 "I will."
 "What is missing?"
 "Some papers."
 "Some papers only?"
 "Yes."
 "What was the nature of the papers?"
 "It is not necessary to say."
 "Are you sure the papers were in the trunk?"
 "I am."
 "It's very strange."
 "What is strange?"
 "That papers should be missing and everything else all right."
 "Why is it strange?"
 "Because ordinary thieves do not care much about papers."
 "Papers were taken from the trunk. Can you recover them?"
 "I may."
 "Will you?"
 "If you will tell me what papers I am to look for."
 "You can find out from the thieves if there were any papers."
 "I may."
 "Recover whatever papers there are."
 "But, sir, I have a matter to speak of concerning those trunks. I have a peculiar tale to tell."
 Moreland exhibited considerable excitement, and exclaimed:
 "What do you mean?"
 "I have a few questions to ask you, and it may be as well to ask them before you again threaten to go and see the chief."
 "Ask your questions."
 Moreland's face was pale.
 "Do those trunks really belong to you?"
 "Yes."
 "They do not bear initials that correspond with your name as recorded in the books of the hotel."
 "They belong to my daughter."
 "Your daughter?"
 "Yes."
 "Ah! you have a daughter?"
 "Yes."
 "Where is your daughter, sir?"
 Moreland was trembling as he answered:
 "I do not know as it concerns you."

CHAPTER XIX.

"MR. MORELAND," said the detective, "there is something very curious about the affair of those trunks."
 "I wish you would explain just what you mean."
 "I doubt that you have any right to them."
 "You do?"
 "I do."
 "You are an impudent man."
 "You had better hear my reasons first."
 "I care nothing about your reasons."

"Listen to me: you had better take me in if you have any little scheme."

"Sir, what do you mean?"
 "I mean I may be better as a friend than a foe in this matter."
 "Ah! I see."
 "What do you see?"
 "You are set to black-mail me."
 "You had better be sure before you make such charges."
 "I think I can dispense with your services."
 "And report me to the chief?"
 "I will get a man to aid me who is honest."
 "You charge me with dishonesty?"
 "I do."
 "Be careful!"
 "You can not black-mail me."
 "I charge you with having no right to those trunks, and I think I can put the rightful owner on the track of them."
 Moreland started, turned pale, and trembled.
 "What do you mean?"
 "I am a detective."
 "So you claim."
 "Men in my business, as a class, are not fools."
 "You would seem to be one."
 "How?"
 "You are throwing away a good job."
 "Maybe not. Listen, sir: detective work sometimes cuts both ways."
 "Will you explain what you mean?"
 "Yes. Sometimes we see through the little games of our employers; sometimes we investigate them a bit."
 "You are a bold fellow."
 "I am; and I would advise you to listen to my story."
 "I will listen."
 "This morning I was up at head-quarters, when a girl—or, rather, a beautiful young lady—came in to report the loss of some baggage. I had an idea flash across my mind, and I at once drew the girl to one side to let her tell me her tale."
 Moreland's face became deathly pale.
 "You are very pale, sir."
 "Proceed."
 "But why are you so pale?"
 "Proceed with your story."
 The detective laughed, and said:
 "I see."
 "See what?"
 "I am getting home on you. Yes, I see you know the young lady."
 "Will you please finish your story?"
 "I will. The lady told me her story. She said she came over in the steamer ——. She came over as a steerage passenger. She said, that on the trip she made the acquaintance of a man who won her confidence, and she left the steamer with this man; that she went to a hotel in New York with him, and he registered her as his daughter; that during the course of the night she had her suspicions aroused concerning the man, and left the hotel."
 Moreland was trembling like an aspen leaf.
 "Why do you tremble so, sir? You must recognize some of the incidents of my tale."
 "Proceed, will you?"
 "Certainly I will. The young lady said she went to get her baggage, and learned that it was gone, but she could not ascertain who had taken it. She described the baggage, and the trunks answer to the description of the ones I recovered for you, and which you claim as the property of your daughter."
 Moreland commenced pacing to and fro across the room. He was greatly agitated.
 "You see, it was by a lucky accident I fell on to your scheme," said the detective, with the utmost coolness.
 "My scheme!" exclaimed Moreland.
 "Yes, sir, your scheme."
 "How dare you?"
 "Mr. Moreland, you opened this interview by telling me I must not take you for a fool. I now tell you, do not take me for one."
 "What do you suspect?"
 "That the trunks belong to the young lady, and that she is not your daughter."
 "What did you tell her?"
 "I told her to say nothing to any one, and I would find her trunks."
 "You promised to find her trunks?"
 "Yes."
 "Do you mean to keep your promise?"
 "That depends."
 "Upon what?"
 "What you may propose, sir."
 "You are a smart man."
 "Thank you."
 "You are prepared to make some money?"
 "I am, sir."
 "A large sum?"
 "All I can."
 "The girl lied to you."
 "Did she?"
 "Yes; but only in part. A portion of her tale is true."
 "Ah!"
 "She is the thief. The girl ran away from Ireland with stolen property in her possession."
 "Ah! I see."
 "I came on the steamer to track her."
 "Yes, I see."
 "I fooled her, and won her confidence."

"Yes, I see."
 "And she gave me the slip."
 "You did not have her confidence after all?"
 "She was even smarter than I gave her credit for being."
 "Yes, I see; and you say she is a thief?"
 "She is."
 "We can catch her nicely."
 "That's what we must do. I have taken you into my confidence, and you must aid me."
 "I will, sir, provided everything is all right."
 Ranleigh meant one thing, the man understood him as meaning another, and he said:
 "Everything will be all right. And now will you describe the girl's appearance?"
 The detective described Margaret Treadwell's appearance.
 "That is the thief. I will catch her yet."
 "Yes, sir, if I am on your side."
 "I intend you shall be. Money is no object to me. And now about the contents of the trunks. There are some papers missing."
 "What papers?"
 "The papers the girl was paid to steal."
 "Who is the girl?"
 "She claims to be Margaret Treadwell. Her real name is Meagher."
 "She stole the papers?"
 "Yes; she was governess in a wealthy Irish family, and she was employed to steal the papers."
 "And the papers are not in the trunk?"
 "No."
 "Maybe they were not in it?"
 "I am sure they were."
 "But I do not see what object a thief would have in taking them."
 "They may have been taken out and mislaid without any suspicion as to their value."
 "That is possible."
 "I will pay you five hundred pounds to recover the papers."
 "That is good pay."
 "Yes; and now tell me when you are to see the girl?"
 "She is to come to see me again."
 "When?"
 "No time is named."
 "We will arrange a plan," said Moreland.

CHAPTER XX.

THERE was a smile under Ranleigh's skin, but he did not permit it to show in his face. His man had run right into the trap that had been so cunningly laid for him.
 "What is your plan?"
 "You are to see the girl again?"
 "Yes."
 "When you do, arrange a meeting with her."
 "Yes."
 "Then come and tell me when you are to meet her."
 "I see."
 "I will arrange a place where you are to bring her."
 "Yes."
 "And you will turn her over to me."
 "For what purpose?"
 "If I get possession of her, I will induce her to return to Ireland with me."
 "Ah! I see. And how much am I to receive for my services?"
 "You shall be well paid."
 The detective left the hotel after some further talk with Moreland; and once outside, he indulged his broad smile. He had his man dead to rights.
 Early in the evening he returned and met Moreland.
 "What news?" demanded the latter.
 "I am on the track of the papers."
 Moreland's face expressed his delight.
 "Then you know there were papers?"
 "Yes; and you had the right idea; the parties did go through the trunks."
 "Ah! I thought so."
 "They did not attach any importance to the papers."
 "From whom did you get the information?"
 "The lady friend of the thief."
 "Ah! I see. And did she see the papers?"
 "Yes."
 "Did she glance at them?"
 "Yes."
 "What were they?"
 "She says there was—or what she believed was—a will, some transcriptions of certificates, records of births, and some other papers which are called identification papers."
 Moreland became excited.
 "Those are the stolen papers, and we must have them at all hazards."
 "We shall have them, sir."
 "You are a jewel!"
 "Eh? That reminds me there was some jewelry in the trunk—some old, antique jewelry."
 "Can it be recovered?"
 "Well, it may."
 "How?"
 "I suppose we will have to pay the value of the jewelry if we get the papers back."
 "I will pay the full value—the intrinsic value—of the jewels."
 "There was a photograph in the trunk."
 "A photograph?"

"Yes—of a young man."
 "Can we get that?"
 "Yes, if we succeed in getting any of the things."
 "We must have them all."
 "We will."
 That same night our hero met Moll, the woman who had put him on the track of Tally-ho.
 "Is everything all right?" demanded the woman.
 "I can not tell yet. I am to meet the young man."
 "When?"
 "Can't tell exactly; I meet him under cover."
 "Why?"
 "I will report everything to you to-morrow, Moll."
 "To-morrow it must be."
 "Why?"
 "I am going away."
 "Where?"
 "To Bermuda. The doctor says there is a chance for me."
 "I am glad to hear it, and to-morrow I will report."
 For reasons of his own, the detective did not wish to tell the full facts to Moll. She was a woman, and women are queer creatures sometimes; and although Moll had given Tally-ho away, she might still seek to save him from running into a trap.
 The detective arranged a meeting with the woman for the next day, and walked off. The fact was he had seen Phil Treadwell, and had made an arrangement with him, and a few moments after his meeting with Moll, under a perfect cover, the detective entered the gambling-saloon where he had first met Phil.
 The young man was engaged in the game. He was pretending to bet recklessly, and in every way acting as he had upon the previous night; but his bets were not so heavy.
 Our hero had put up the job. He was working a deep scheme. After awhile Tally-ho entered the place. He watched a chance to catch Phil's eye, when he passed him a signal.
 Phil appeared to be greatly annoyed, but at length quit the game.
 "See here, young feller," said Tally-ho, "I told you to keep out of that game."
 "It was you who first got me into it."
 "Well, I'm tellin' you to keep out of it now."
 Phil led the way over to a remote corner of the room, where a rough-looking man was seemingly asleep in his chair.
 "How did you get home last night?"
 "The officer let me go?"
 "Who was the fellow who got around there so lively?"
 "I don't know."
 "Had you ever seen him before?"
 "No."
 "He pretended to know you."
 "Yes, and I've my idea."
 "What's your idea?"
 "He's a detective."
 "Eh?"
 "I think he is a detective."
 "What makes you think so?"
 "Well, it's my idea."
 "Who was he watching?"
 "Me."
 "You?"
 "Yes."
 "Why would he watch you?"
 "I think the firm have had an intimation, and I think I can thank you for it."
 "You are mistaken, young feller; that was not a detective, or if he was, he was not after you."
 "Who was he after?"
 "He was on a general lay. But now, have you thought over what I've been saying to you these last few days?"
 "I have."
 "And what's your verdict?"
 "I don't want to go into the scheme."
 "You don't want to go into it?"
 "No."
 "Why not?"
 "I am sure to be suspected."
 "See here, young feller, you might as well be killed for a sheep as a lamb."
 "But I am not sure this scheme will help me."
 "It will help you; it will get you out of your scrape."
 "Suppose it should fail?"
 "It can't fail."
 "Well, I don't want to go into it."
 "That's your decision?"
 "Yes."
 "All right; to-morrow you will go to jail."
 "You will not blow on me?"
 "I will."
 "Will you not give me a chance?"
 "I've offered you a chance."
 "Will you give me one more day to consider?"
 "Time is money, young fellow."
 "I must have more to-day."
 "No, not an hour! You are up to some game."
 "Will you not give me a day?"
 "No."
 "Then, if I must, I will go with you."

CHAPTER XXI.

"I THOUGHT you would," said Tally-ho, as a wicked gleam shone in his eyes. "To-morrow night we will carry out the

scheme," he continued; "and you must come with me now and learn just how we mean to operate."

Phil Treadwell appeared to be very much agitated, and he muttered:

"I do not know what will become of me!"

"Oh, you are all right. And now, let me tell you something: I am your friend. The gang did not want you to join in this thing."

"Then let me retire from it."

"But, listen; they were in favor of killing you; and, if you had not decided to go in with us, they would have killed you."

"Why?"

"Because you were on to our racket. I persuaded you to go in with us to save your life, and if you weaken now it will cost you your life. Our fellows never spare a squealer. They'd hang rather than let off a man who has once squealed on them."

The man who had appeared to be asleep in his chair managed to pass Phil a tip, and the young man left the gambling-saloon with Tally-ho.

It was long after midnight when a young man entered the rooms of Ranleigh. The latter was at home; he had been waiting.

"Well, my lad, is all arranged?"

"Yes. It is put off, however, until the night after to-morrow."

"How many are in the scheme?"

"Four besides myself."

"Well, you gave them all the information they required?"

"I did."

"And everything is arranged?"

"Yes."

"What are the plans?"

"I am not to get them all complete, as arranged, until to-morrow night."

"You went slow?"

"I did."

"They have no suspicion of a give-away?"

"Not the least."

"You are all right at your office?"

"Straight as a string, and just in time, as to-morrow would have led to a discovery. There is not an error in the book-keeper's accounts, and they are going through all the books. My defalcation would have been discovered; but for you I would have been a dead man now!"

"I thought you had some such scheme; and under all the circumstances you are a lucky man."

"And you were a kind man to loan me all this money."

"Phil, did you ever see the woman who is known as Tally-ho's wife?"

"Yes, poor creature! One night, when he was mad with liquor, he would have killed her if it had not been for me."

"Do you know, young man, that evil courses always bring their punishment?"

"I do."

"And virtue is not always alone its own reward. Virtue is oft-times rewarded, and in your case this is the fact. You made a friend of Moll."

"I know that she was the first one to open my eyes to the real character of Tally-ho. She prevailed upon me to refuse to go into the robbery scheme."

"She is a dying woman."

"Yes, I fear she has not long to live."

"She has become a reformed woman."

"I am glad of it."

"She is seeking to atone for some of her past life."

"I do not see how she can, in her condition."

"Let me tell you something: Moll advanced the money I let you have to straighten out your accounts."

The young man exhibited considerable surprise.

"She advanced the money!" he repeated.

"She did."

"This is strange."

"Yes, it is one of those wonderful life romances we sometimes meet with."

"I will never be able to pay her."

"Why not?"

"She will not live to receive the money."

"She will get her pay, never you fear."

"And now, sir, will you tell me about myself—what you know?"

"Not now; wait until after the robbery."

"Do you mean to let the robbery proceed?"

"I mean to get the dead wood on them. I mean to let them into the bank and get to work, and then I will close in on the whole gang, and I will have all the necessary evidence to rid New York of their presence for a long time."

Upon the day following the events we have described, Ranleigh was looking at the morning papers, when an advertisement met his eye that caused him to utter an exclamation of satisfaction.

The advertisement read as follows:

"Wanted, by a young lady from Dublin, a position as governess in some gentleman's family. The advertiser is well educated, fully capable, and more desirous of a home than wages. Address M. T., this office."

"Well, I've got her!" exclaimed our hero, and at once he went out. He called on a merchant friend who lived in a fine up-town residence, and made certain arrangements with him, and then an answer was dropped at the newspaper office.

That same evening Phil met Tally-ho, all the arrangements for the robbery were disclosed, and later on all the facts were opened up to Ranleigh.

Again the young man asked for information concerning his own affairs.

"Not now, Phil."

"Something may happen."

"What can happen?"

"We can not tell."

"If anything happens to me, I have made arrangements as far as you are concerned. If anything happens to you, it is just as well nothing were revealed."

Upon the following day our hero went up-town to his friend's house. He was got up as an elderly gentleman of very respectable appearance. The servants of the house had been properly instructed as to how they were to act under certain circumstances.

An hour passed after the detective's entrance into the house, when there came a ring at the door-bell, and a veiled lady asked:

"Is Mr. Case at home?"

"He is, miss."

"Can I see him?"

"Walk in."

The lady was shown into the parlor, and a few moments later our hero, as the respectable-looking elderly gentleman, entered the room.

"You are Mr. Case?"

"That is my name."

"I am the advertiser for a position as governess."

"Ah, yes! And what is your name?"

"Margaret Taylor."

"Are you from Dublin, Miss Taylor?"

"Yes, sir."

"How long have you been in America?"

"Not long, sir; but I am fully capable."

"You are well up in the English branches?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you teach French?"

"Yes, sir."

"And music?"

"Yes, sir."

"And diplomacy?"

The girl hesitated.

"I do not understand you, sir."

The gentleman laughed, and said:

"I will explain. It is not an American custom for ladies to keep their veils drawn down when seeking for a position."

The lady raised her veil and disclosed the face of Margaret Treadwell.

CHAPTER XXII.

ALL the features of the steamer disguise were removed, and Margaret appeared as a remarkably handsome Irish lady—and some of the latter are truly beautiful.

"Have you the proper recommendations, Miss Taylor?"

"I have not, sir."

"Have you no recommendations?"

"I can only ask you, sir, to communicate with friends in Ireland."

The gentleman appeared to betray considerable suspicion, and said:

"You will find it difficult to secure a position under such circumstances."

"Yes, sir, I fear I will."

"Did you bring no letters with you?"

"I unfortunately lost my baggage, sir."

"You lost your baggage?"

"Yes, sir."

"How was that?"

"I can not explain now, sir."

"You say your name is Taylor?"

"Yes, sir."

"Margaret Taylor?"

"Yes, sir."

The girl held a handkerchief in her hands, and the keen eyes of Ranleigh made a certain discovery.

"I fear you are deceiving me, miss."

The girl blushed, and said:

"I will not trouble you further, sir; I see that my lack of recommendation is a barrier to my employment."

"Do not go, miss. But see here!"

The detective deftly snatched the girl's handkerchief from her hand and fixed his eyes on the name. The girl turned pale and trembled.

"M. T.," said the detective, and added: "Margaret Treadwell."

He then fixed his eyes on the girl, and said in a severe tone:

"You are deceiving me."

"I will go, sir."

"No, you shall not go, Margaret Treadwell. Yes, that is the name, miss. I think I know who you are."

The girl trembled like an aspen leaf.

The detective continued:

"I am connected with the police department, and a gentleman named Moreland has reported the loss of a young lady named Treadwell."

"Sir, is it possible?"

"Yes, miss; we must inquire into this."

"Oh, sir, I am not the party."

"Then why are you so anxious to hasten away?"

"I have other calls to make."

"Miss Treadwell, you must excuse me, but I must trouble you to tell me the truth: the man Moreland has claimed that Miss Treadwell is a thief."

"A thief, sir?"

"Yes."

"It is false!"

"Let me tell you what he claims. He says you were a governess."

in a family in Ireland, and that you ran away, stealing a will and certain other important family papers; that you were bribed to do so."

"Sir, the story is false, or he alludes to some other person."

"I am sorry, miss, but appearances are against you. Yes, you came here as an applicant for the position of governess, and you came under an assumed name."

"Oh, what shall I do?" moaned the girl.

"I will tell you what to do."

"Please do, sir."

"Confess the whole truth to me."

"I have nothing to confess?"

"You have nothing to confess?"

"Nothing."

"Is this man's story true?"

"It is false."

"Well, I will admit that I know some facts about Margaret Treadwell."

"What do you know, sir?"

"She came over in the steamer —, and this man Moreland was on board."

The girl's face depicted her surprise.

"There was also a detective on board who was really the girl's friend. He pointed out to her an enemy, and immediately afterward she disappeared."

The girl fixed her eyes on the speaker.

"Who are you, sir?"

The detective removed his wig and stood revealed as the man she had met on the steamer.

The girl uttered a low cry of alarm.

"Miss Treadwell, you need not be alarmed. I was your friend on the steamer. I am your friend now. Indeed, if you really desire to find a position as governess, I can furnish you the necessary credentials."

"Sir, what does all this mean?"

"You would like to have me tell you?"

"Indeed, sir, I would."

The girl was deeply agitated.

"I will tell you what it all means on one condition; you must tell me why you left me on the steamer."

"Are you, sir, really my friend?"

"I can furnish you the best evidence of my friendship in good time."

"Is it true what you told me of this man Moreland?"

"Yes; he has charged that you are a thief."

"Do you believe his story?"

"No."

"I will explain, sir, how I came to hide away from you."

"Please do, as it was the only time in my life I was so nicely done for. How you evaded me I can not tell."

"The mystery can be easily explained."

"I should like to hear the explanation."

"The story I told you on the steamer, sir, was true."

"You did not tell me a story on the steamer."

"Well, sir, I did, and I will tell you the whole truth now."

"Tell me how you evaded me."

"You remember the man who followed me?"

"I do."

"You remember he disappeared?"

"I do."

"I will tell you, sir. I know now what I did not know then. Moreland and the deprecit of I man are one and the same party."

"Yes, I know that. And you say you did not know it on the steamer?"

"No, sir; but after you had spoken to me, a gentleman came to me and asked me if I knew who you were. He was an Irishman, and appeared to be a gentleman. I said you were an American Government officer, and he told me, no; you were a well-known Irish criminal; and he said he would bring the steward of the vessel to prove his statement. You know I had reason for believing the statement."

"And you were convinced?"

"I permitted myself to be. The gentleman told me that he had reason to believe that you meant me harm, and he offered to shield me. The steward and other officers on the steamer assured me of the gentleman's high character, and I accepted his proposition to put myself under his protection. I had disguises on board the vessel, and I changed my appearance and left the vessel with the gentleman when the Government boat met the steamer."

"It was well managed."

"Yes, sir; we got away safely."

"When did you come to suspect the man?"

"When we reached the hotel."

"Did you know he was your enemy?"

"No; but I feared, sir, that he meant me harm."

The girl blushed as he spoke, and the detective discerned that she had not discovered, after all, the true character of Moreland.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Miss TREADWELL, I have a revelation to make to you. I know your whole history."

"You do, sir?" exclaimed the girl, in surprise.

"I do."

"Who revealed it, sir?"

"I will explain later on. And now tell me: have you any suspicion as to the real identity of Mr. Moreland?"

The girl's face blanched.

"What can you mean, sir?"

"Did it ever strike you that he was trailing you—that he was

your deadliest foe—that he entered that ship because you were on board of it?"

"Yes, sir, such a suspicion has entered my mind; for, as I have intimated, I have since come to suspect that the old man whom you pointed out as a foe, and Mr. Moreland, are one and the same."

"You have no proofs of the fact?"

"No, sir."

"It is merely a suspicion?"

"Yes, sir."

"The suspicion is correct."

"And who is he, sir?"

"He is, I think, an emissary of Francis Browne."

The girl uttered a cry.

"What do you know, sir, of Francis Browne?"

"I know of him; I tell you I know your whole history."

"Sir, did you steal my baggage?"

"No, I did not."

"Then how came you to learn all the facts?"

"Moreland obtained possession of your baggage."

"I suspected he did."

"Then why did you not claim it?"

"I was waiting for a chance to arrange some plan."

Our hero told the girl the story of the baggage, and she was amazed.

"Now you see," said Ranleagh, "I am your friend."

"You are indeed my friend. And you have the will and all my papers?"

"I have."

"Oh, sir, what a risk I ran in doubting you!"

"Certainly you did. I believe Moreland would have taken your life as soon as opportunity offered."

"Oh, what shall I do? He will yet find me and murder me!"

"You need have no fear, you are safe now. I will manage your case for you, and I will make of Moreland a witness in your behalf."

"Never, sir, if he is in the employ of Francis Browne."

"You leave that matter to me. I have managed worse men than Moreland; and now let me tell you of a scheme."

The detective related all his subsequent deals with Moreland, and added:

"You see, I am under contract to deliver to him the will and yourself."

"And will you keep your contract?" the girl asked, innocently.

The detective laughed, and answered:

"Yes, I will, with your assistance and connivance."

"With my assistance?"

"Yes."

"I do not understand."

The detective explained his plans.

"You are a wonderful man, sir."

"I wish to get this man in my grip, and I will gain evidence which will be useful to you and your brother."

"My poor brother, sir, I have given up all idea of ever seeing him."

"You have? Well, I have not. Indeed, I am already on his track."

"You are on my brother's track?"

"Yes."

"How can that be?"

"Well, I am."

"You would not know him."

"You forget his photograph was in the trunk."

"I remember you found it."

"Here it is."

"Oh, sir, I am so glad! And you really think he lives?"

"I know the original of that picture lives."

"You do, sir?"

"Yes."

The girl became deeply agitated.

"Let me tell you I heard the fact from Moreland."

"Does Moreland know my brother lives?"

"Yes; he has seen your brother."

"Then my brother is doomed."

"Not yet."

"That man will kill him."

"Not while I am around. You need have no fear, I tell you. I have Moreland in my grip, and when I get a man in my grip, it's bad for him when I squeeze."

"Why did you arrange this plan to capture me?" Margaret asked.

"I will tell you; I feared to give you a chance to slip me again, as you did on the steamer. And now, where are you staying?"

"I am stopping at a boarding-house."

"I wish to give you a piece of advice. I think now you will act on my advice."

"I will."

"Return to your boarding-house, and do not leave it until you receive permission from me."

"But, sir, all my drafts were in my trunk."

"You forget that all your drafts are in my possession; you are independent now."

"I had but a small amount in money. I must find a position, and with your assistance I may succeed."

The detective laughed, and said:

"You need have no fear. You forget again that I told you I was on the track of your brother, and that he need not fear Moreland. I will accompany you to your boarding-house."

The girl appeared to be confused.

"One word, miss: if you still doubt me, say so."

"No, sir; I do not."

"Then you must act absolutely under my advice."
 "But will you not tell me about my brother?"
 "I can tell you nothing now; not until after we have had an interview with Moreland."
 "Do you propose for me to meet him?"
 "I do. I like a joke, and I propose to play a practical joke on that man. Indeed, in his presence I propose to put you in possession of your property. I propose he shall then confess to you how he stole your trunk, and we will have him."
 "I see your plan."
 "Yes, and I will carry my plan through; never fear but I will."
 The detective reassumed his disguise and started with the girl to her boarding-house. On the way he made arrangements for communicating with her, and also instructed her how she was to act under certain contingencies.
 Having reached her home, he bid her good-bye, and proceeded to meet the rogue Moreland. He found the latter waiting for him as usual.
 "What luck?" demanded Moreland.
 "Well, sir, I've seen the girl again."
 "You have seen her?"
 "Yes, sir."
 "And you have arranged to deliver her into my hands?"
 "I have."
 "Good, you are a jewel! And how about the papers that were in the trunk?"
 "I shall recover them."
 "You are sure of recovering them?"
 "I am; and here is the proof. I have had this returned."
 The detective handed over the photograph of Philip Treadwell.
 "But it's the papers I want," said Moreland.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"You will have the papers in good time, sir," said Ranleigh.
 "And how about the girl?"
 "Well, she tells a strange story."
 "Ah! what does she say?"
 "She says you are a secret assassin."
 "What nonsense!"
 "She tells a strange story indeed."
 "What story did she tell you?"
 The detective related the tale he had read from the diary. Moreland listened with a changing expression of countenance, and when the detective had concluded, he said:
 "Do you believe that tale?"
 "It is not for me to say."
 "It is not for you to say?"
 "No, sir."
 "Why not?"
 "Because I am in your employ; but I've news for you."
 "What news?"
 "The girl, I think, has found a powerful friend."
 "A friend?"
 "Yes."
 "Who?"
 "A detective who believes her story."
 "What is his name?"
 "Ranleigh."
 Moreland gave a start.
 "Has she met that rascal?"
 "Yes; do you know him?"
 "I do; he is a villain. He is really abetting the girl."
 "Ah, that's the case, eh?"
 "Yes."
 "Well, all I have to say is that he is a dangerous man."
 "How dangerous?"
 "Well, when he gets into a thing he goes straight ahead."
 "But he is a rogue."
 "I never heard he was."
 "You know him?"
 "I know his general reputation on the force."
 "He believes the girl's story?"
 "Yes."
 "And what is he going to do?"
 "He has set out to find her baggage."
 "He can't do that."
 "I don't know; the girl suspects you."
 "She suspects me?"
 "Yes."
 "Of what?"
 "Of having stolen her baggage."
 "Nonsense!"
 "She has given your description to Ranleigh, and has told him where you are stopping."
 The man turned pale, and said:
 "He has not been here."
 "He is piping you, probably. He will find the baggage in your possession and then you will go to jail."
 "But the girl is a thief."
 "You had no right to get her baggage, all the same."
 "What would you advise?"
 "I would advise that you remove the baggage; it is of no value to you."
 "That is so."
 "Better let me take it away?"
 "Do so."
 "I will, as I think it is the safest plan."
 "And now, how about the girl?"
 "Well, what do you propose?"

"I wish her in my possession."
 "Do you think it is safe for us to trap her when she has a friend like Ranleigh?"
 "Let me once get her in my possession, and with your permission I'll see that I keep her safe."
 "Remember, you have the detective watching you."
 "You do your part and I will arrange about that."
 A carriage was called and our hero removed the baggage. He had reasons for desiring to get the baggage in his possession.
 Later on Ranleigh met Philip. It was the night when the robbery was to take place. Phil was at the detective's house. He was excited and nervous. Having regained his honor, he lost the coolness that had distinguished him when our hero first met him.
 "Well, my boy, are you ready for to-night's adventure?"
 "I am; but I feel very sad."
 "Why sad?"
 "I think to-night will finish me."
 "Eh, finish you?"
 "Yes; those fellows will keep watch on me, and the moment trouble comes I go down."
 "My dear boy, you need not have the least fear. I do not do business that way."
 "I think they suspect me."
 "Eh, that is bad. What makes you think so?"
 "They have been piping the place all day."
 "Oh, that's in the way of business. No, no, you need have no fear."
 "I have, all the same."
 "It will be all right. And now I have a few words to say to you. I understand you think your sister is dead?"
 The youth exhibited great excitement, and said:
 "What are you to reveal?"
 "You must keep perfectly cool."
 "I will."
 "Your sister lives."
 "Lives?"
 "Yes."
 "You are sure?"
 "Yes."
 "On what do you found your statement?"
 "She has communicated with me."
 "Communicated with you?"
 "Yes."
 "My sister?"
 "Yes."
 "For what purpose?"
 "She is seeking her brother."
 "And why have I not heard from her all these years?"
 "I think you are both under obligations to an enemy. Your letters, I believe, were intercepted."
 "And she lives?"
 "Yes."
 "You are sure it is my sister?"
 "You once asked me how I came to know so much of your affairs. Does not the fact that I do know so much prove that it is your sister?"
 "And where is she?"
 "She has started for America."
 "She has started for America?"
 "Yes."
 "And does she know I live?"
 "Yes."
 "Will you tell me how you came to identify me?"
 "I had your photograph, and recognized you the first moment I saw you."
 "This is wonderful!"
 "I have more wonderful news for you. Both your uncles are dead."
 "Both my uncles are dead?"
 "Yes; and you are the heir to the Treadwell estate. No one stands between you and its possession; so you see Moll's chances for being repayed are pretty good, after all."
 "I will not engage in this affair to-night."
 "Oh, yes, you will."
 "No, I can not."
 "You will to oblige me?"
 "You will not ask me to do it under the circumstances."
 "I knew all the circumstances when I did ask you to do it. I have been a good friend to you. Where would you have been but for me?"
 "Say no more. I will do as you direct."
 "Yes; and remember what I say. Further, I repeat, no harm will come to you, and you will atone for all your weakness by aiding me to capture these men."
 "Will I not be compromised?"
 "No; I have talked the whole matter over with the district attorney and chief of police."
 "I am at your service."
 "Yes; and you must not flinch. You will do justice a great service."

CHAPTER XXV.

THAT same night Phil Treadwell went down and met Tally-ho. The gang were in the low resort and were in a jolly mood. All their plans were complete, and they calculated upon carrying out a grand scheme which would result in the securing of an immense boodle.
 Phil joined them, and Tally-ho called him to one side, and said:
 "You're dead set to go in with us?"
 "You have compelled me to join you."

"Well, young fellow, I've something to tell you. I've received word that you've been very busy with a stranger lately."

"Who told you?"

"Never mind who told me. Is it true?"

"Yes, it is true."

"Who was the man?"

"A lawyer."

"A lawyer?" repeated Tally-ho.

"Yes."

"What business have you with a lawyer?"

"I am a witness in a will case."

"You are a witness?"

"Yes."

"Well, just listen to me. You may be telling me the truth, or you may be lying. If you are lying, so much the worse for you, for if anything goes wrong to-night, you'll never testify in any will case. We'll knife you so quick your light will go out as though you were struck by apoplexy!"

"Why should I be held responsible if anything goes wrong?"

"You're not one of the gang, that's why. And now listen: if we are sent up, there'll be enough of the 'skids' left to settle your case. Bad luck to us to-night is your doom under any circumstances."

"I can not help it. I did not go into this thing willingly, and I am willing to draw out now."

"You are willing to draw out now?"

"Yes."

A smile played over Tally-ho's face.

"Do you want to draw out?"

"I do."

"And you will?"

"Gladly, if you will consent."

"Well, lad, I don't consent. We need you to-night, and if we don't get the boodle, you are a dead man; that's all there is about it."

"It's an unfair position to place me in. I will not join you."

"You won't join us?"

"No."

Tally-ho drew a pistol from his pocket, deliberately cocked it, and said:

"Say that again?"

There was no mistaking his intent.

"You compel me to join you?"

"Yes."

"And hold me responsible for the success of your scheme?"

"If we fail you die."

"All right; I will have to take my chances."

"There are no chances to take if you do your duty. Our plans are complete."

"At what hour will you visit the bank?"

"Between three and four o'clock. We will go there singly. I will go first and you will join me, and then the others will come on after you and I are in. And now, you are sure about the night-watchman?"

"The regular watchman told me he would not be on duty to-night."

"Eh?" ejaculated Tally-ho.

"The regular watchman told me he would not be on duty."

A gleam of suspicion shone in Tally-ho's eyes.

"He told you he would not be on duty?"

"Yes."

"How did he come to tell you that?"

"I don't know."

"Did he say why he would not be on duty?"

"Yes; he said he was going to a wedding."

"All right, we understand each other. Remember, if we win, you're all right; if we fail, you're a doomed man!"

Tally-ho proceeded and opened up more of his plans to Phil, and the time passed until one o'clock, when Tally-ho called Phil aside, and said:

"I am going now. I will meet you at the corner of — Street; be there exactly at two. If you fail, I'll think you're going back on us."

"I'll be there if I can."

"If you can?"

"Yes."

"What will stop you?"

"I do not know."

"Why do you say if you can?"

"I may drop dead."

"You will if you are not there. Good-night for a little while, sonny. You be there!"

While Phil was in company with Tally-ho and his pals, Ranleagh was hovering around. He was standing on a corner near the rendezvous, when a woman came along and touched his arm.

"Come with me," she whispered.

The detective recognized Moll.

"Halloo! I thought you were on the sea?"

"No; I am not going until the next steamer."

"What made you stay over?"

"I'll tell you some other time. Come with me."

The detective walked a few steps down the street, and came to a halt.

"What are you doing here, Ranleagh?"

"I'm on a lay."

"Do you know that young fellow Brownie is going to work with the gang to-night?"

"Do you know it?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"I know your game."

"You do?"

"Yes."

"And that is why you stayed over?"

"Yes."

"What is my game?"

"You mean to arrest Tally-ho to-night."

The detective made no answer.

"I know what you mean to do; no need to admit it, as I am willing."

"You are willing?"

"Yes. If I meant to give the thing away, don't you know I would have done it before this?"

"Well, what is on your mind?"

"That boy."

"What of him?"

"You're letting him act as a decoy."

"How do you know?"

"I've put certain facts together."

"Well, what of it?"

"He must not do it."

"Why not?"

"There is a scheme to murder him."

"How do you know?"

"I've got it straight."

"I'll take care of him."

"You know of the scheme?"

"I suspect it."

"What are your plans?"

"No harm will come to the lad."

"You are sure?"

"I do not generally make mistakes on such subjects."

"Are you running this thing alone?"

"Why?"

"You will be beat if you do."

"What makes you think so?"

"The men mean murder. They're in a desperate condition."

Ranleagh laid his hand on Moll's arm, and said:

"Have no fear. Go home, and to-morrow we will have some strange news for you."

"Ranleagh, one word: do not spare Tally-ho on my account."

"You have turned against him?"

"No; but I would not raise my hand to save him. He is one of the meanest and most heartless villains in New York."

"You're right, Moll, and he is well out of the way, and he will be. Now go; business commences. I see some one coming who brings me news. I've big work on hand to-night."

CHAPTER XXVII.

MOLL walked away, and a few moments later our hero was joined by young Treadwell.

"Does the game go on to-night?" demanded Ranleagh.

"Yes; everything is settled."

"You were warned?"

"Yes."

"You did not scare?"

"I did not."

Phil imparted to the detective all the plans, and disappeared.

At the hour named young Treadwell met Tally-ho.

"Aha, you are on hand!"

"I am here."

"You are late."

The men were standing where they could see the face of the City Hall clock.

"Only five minutes late."

Tally-ho proved himself to be quite a philosopher by remarking:

"A conspiracy that would destroy a State could be hatched in five minutes."

Phil made no remark, but he saw that it was necessary for him to be on his guard, as he was suspected, and the men might take advantage of the first indication of treachery to lay him out.

"Come with me," said Tally-ho.

The two men proceeded down the street and stopped before a small building which was surrounded on every side by loftier edifices.

Tally-ho listened a moment, and then said, in a low tone:

"I hear a step."

His eyes, shining in contrast to his pale face, were fixed upon Phil.

"It may be the patrolman."

"No; at this hour he should be around on — Street. If he is here, he has a point. Come."

The two men walked down the street, and a few moments passed, when a policeman came sauntering along. The officer, singularly enough, stopped before the very store where Phil and Tally-ho had been standing.

Tally-ho grasped the youth's arm, and said:

"Do you see that?"

Phil was cool, and answered:

"Yes, I do."

"What does it mean?"

"I do not know."

Tally-ho's face was pale, his eyes glittered, and his voice was husky as he said:

"We have gone too far to be 'bilked' now. That cop is on a lay. He's had a tip."

Phil did not speak.

"Something must be done," continued Tally-ho.

The officer still stood in front of the building.

"Brownie," said Tally-ho, "there's a job on hand for you."

"What am I to do?"

Tally-ho drew from his pocket a long, glittering blade.
 "Go up there and engage that cop in conversation, and when a chance offers, drive this knife through his heart. We can not be set back now; we've got things too fine for success."

Phil's blood ran cold. A terrible alternative was presented.
 "You go and drop him, or I will drop you!" came the fierce declaration.

"I did not agree to become a murderer."

"Don't give me any slack! Go! down the cop!"
 At that moment the policeman moved away. Tally-ho stood watching him a moment, and then said:

"We will wait and see if he comes back."

Phil earnestly prayed that the officer would not return.

Some moments passed, and the two men again appeared in front of the little house. All was still, and Tally-ho stood listening and watching. Suddenly the side door of the building was opened on a crack. Tally-ho uttered a low signal and the door opened.

"Come," he said, quickly, and he darted within the door, followed by Phil. Once inside, Tally-ho asked:

"Is everything all right?"

"Everything is all right," came the answer.

"How many are here?"

"You are the first arrival."

"There was a cop outside."

"Yes; I saw him."

"Do you think he's got a tip?"

"No; he always comes to a halt right out there; it's his stopping-place. He is the fellow I call Old Method. He stops at just such places and walks at just such a pace."

"Then you think it's all right?"

"Certainly, it's all right."

"How's the aperture?"

"We've got a dead open and shut for getting next door."

"Have you been through to explore?"

"Yes."

"And everything is clear?"

"Yes."

"Any watchman on duty?"

"No."

"You had that point down right, young feller, I see," said Tally-ho, addressing Phil.

Phil made no answer; indeed, the youth was very uncomfortable. He knew his peril; if anything should happen to Ranleigh, his friend, his chances were bad indeed.

Half an hour passed, and there came a signal outside.

The man who had admitted Phil and Tally-ho sprang to the door and opened it, and a moment later another of the gang entered.

A short time passed, and there came another signal, and another of the gang was admitted. And so, in time, all hands were assembled.

"Now, boys," said Tally-ho, "we're ready for business. This is a good night for us; we're in luck. Follow me."

The men descended to the cellar. Dark-lanterns were produced, and an opening was disclosed leading from one cellar into the adjoining one. The foundations of the two houses had been bored through. One after another of the men crawled through until all were in the cellar of the building that was to be plundered. Slowly they ascended the stairs, Indian file, to the counting-room.

Phil accompanied them, but his heart was in his throat. He expected every instant that Ranleigh would disclose himself; that a fight would commence, and then it would be time for him to look out. Indeed, he considered himself a doomed man. He did not see how by any possibility he could escape, as upon the instant that treachery was discovered the men would dispatch him. They were sworn to do so.

Once in the counting-room, the gang deliberately set to work. There were several safes in the office, and Tally-ho called to Phil:

"Here you are, Brownie, old man! Now, where do we commence? Which safe contains the boodle?"

Phil hesitated.

"Look out, sonny; don't weaken now. Which is the safe that's got the boodle?"

Still Phil hesitated.

"Will you speak or die?"

"I'm thinking."

"Thinking about that?"

"Trying to remember which safe has the boodle."

Phil was really seeking to gain time. He did not understand Ranleigh's plans, and thought that he was not on hand.

"Come, come, old man; think quick, or I'll bleed you!" came the command.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Phil said coolly in answer to Tally-ho's threat:

"You wouldn't have me point out the wrong safe?"

"No; but we're losing time; and if we are to get along without your help, we will," and as the villain spoke he clapped his hand on the butt of a pistol.

Phil did not know what to do.

"That's all we brought you along for, young fellow."

Phil had delayed as long as he could, and pointed to a certain safe.

"The money is there."

"You are sure?"

"I am sure."

"Good enough; boys, let's bore for the boodle; we're in luck."

Phil stood to one side as the men dumped their tools on the floor, and the mechanics of the gang set to picking out the particular tools for their purpose.

Tally-ho appeared to be only a director, and his eyes, as Phil imagined, were constantly fixed on him.

The men commenced drilling the safe. Their work had proceeded along pretty well, when suddenly there came a most thrilling and startling interruption. A noise was heard other than that made by the tools of the burglars.

"Hark, boys! what's that?" inquired Tally-ho.

The men all listened, and a thrilling picture was presented at that moment, and could a photographer have caught them as they assumed their different attitudes, he would have pursued a fine study.

"Douse your glim, boys!" said Tally-ho.

The men were in darkness, and Phil took the opportunity to steal away from their near vicinity.

A moment passed and all was still.

"A false scare, I reckon, boys," whispered Tally-ho. "Turn on your lights and get to work."

The lights were turned on, and Tally-ho looked around.

He could not see Phil.

"Halloo!" he muttered between his teeth, "where is he?"

"Brownie!" he called in a low tone.

There came no answer.

How Phil came to refuse to answer will be explained later.

"Hold on, boys! I don't like this."

At that moment there came a voice, saying:

"Yes, hold on, boys!"

In an instant the men were all on their feet, and each man drew a weapon.

At that moment there came a voice again:

"Put up your guns, boys; you're all covered!"

The men stood with glaring eyes and bated breath, and an instant later Ranleigh stepped forward.

"Good-morning, Tally-ho," he said.

When the detective spoke, he had his man covered with the muzzle of a cocked revolver.

"Who are you?" demanded Tally-ho.

"An old friend. And now, lads, throw up your hands! I did not come alone this morning. I've got you all dead to rights!"

The burglars were at bay; indeed, they were dazed, the "bulge" had come upon them so suddenly.

"Your jig is up, boys. You can start in on a little scrimmage if you choose; in fact, it would suit me, and save the State some expense!"

"We're done!" said Tally-ho. "But let me ask you a question."

"Talk fast."

"Who let you in on this thing?"

"My boy, you can thank yourself for coming face to face with justice at last. Had you treated Moll like half a man, you would have been all right for awhile, I reckon."

A shadow fell over Tally-ho's face as he demanded:

"Did Moll let you in on this?"

"She did."

"Do you know Brownie?"

"I've got the ribbons on the lad; but I didn't mean to harm him. You worried the lad into this job."

"And Moll gave the thing away! I wonder where she got her points?"

"I reckon she was laying to get a point on you. And now, lads, how is it—shall we have a little fun, or do you throw up your hands?"

Three or four officers stepped from the shadow. The burglars saw that they had walked right into a big trap. The jig was indeed all up with them.

"Come, Tally-ho, old man, what do you say?"

"We're fools, cap."

"That's the way to talk it."

The five burglars were handcuffed and marched off to headquarters. It had been one of the neatest jobs that had been executed in a long time. Five of the worst cracksmen in New York were captured, and the evidence was so dead against them that they all knew there was no need to plead. They were all good for fifteen or twenty years. They had come to the fate at last that surely awaits every evil-doer. No criminal ever escapes. Sooner or later in some way he is brought face to face with his crime, and often it overtakes him just as Tally-ho and his pals were overtaken in the manner we have above described.

At the time the lights were extinguished we have recorded that Phil moved away. He had not gone but a few steps when a voice whispered in his ear:

"It's all right, Phil."

The young man's heart thrilled. He came near making an outcry.

"Move away, Phil, and have no fear; the jiggers are ours sure. Everything is all right."

Phil did move away, and that is the reason, as narrated, that he did not answer Tally-ho when the latter called his name.

After the men were locked up, Ranleigh returned to his lodgings. He found Phil there awaiting him. The youth was very nervous and greatly excited.

"Have you secured them all?" he asked.

"Yes; they're all caught."

"They cursed me, I suppose?"

"No; they do not think you are the party who gave them away."

"They don't think it was me who gave them away?"

"No."

"How is that?"

"They think it was Moll."

"Poor Moll, they will kill her!"

"No, they will not harm the woman. In the first place, they will all go up the river sure. There's no doubt on that point."

"But some of their friends may do her harm."

"No fear about that. Those people don't borrow trouble that

way except on special occasions; but even if they had it in for Moll, she is all right."

"How?"

"She sails away in a day or two, and it is doubtful whether she ever returns to New York. The woman is really dying."

"New will you tell me all you were to tell me?"

"Not now. We need sleep. To-morrow, my dear boy, I will make a very wonderful and startling revelation to you."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ON the day following the incidents we have described, Ranleigh directed Phil to go to the bank, as usual, and not let on, by word or look, that he knew anything concerning the attempted robbery.

Going down in the cars, the young man read an account of the affair. The reporters had got the whole business from headquarters, and the larger papers had got the account in their columns. On the train the affair was the principal subject of conversation.

Arrived at the bank, all was excitement. The managers of the bank were on hand, and an examination was made of the attack on the safe. The implements of the burglars had been removed by the detectives.

While the public were discussing the subject of the robbery, the man who had done the public, in truth, a great service, was holding a thrilling conversation with a very innocent and beautiful girl.

Ranleigh proceeded to the house where Margaret Treadwell was boarding. He was admitted, and the girl came down to the parlor to receive him. She looked beautiful indeed, and the detective felt proud in having been of service to such a lovely woman.

"Have you read the morning papers?" asked Ranleigh, after the usual salutations.

"I do not read the papers, sir. American papers contain little to interest me."

The detective smiled, and said:

"That is a proof of how little we know, at times, of what is of interest to us."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"You have a brother?"

The girl turned pale.

"Oh, sir! have you news of him?"

"I have found him."

"Found my brother?"

"Yes."

The girl's agitation became great.

"You are sure," she demanded, in a trembling voice, "that it is really my brother?"

"I am sure it is your brother."

"Where is he, sir?"

"He is safe."

"And will you take me to him?"

"Not at this moment; but you shall see him soon."

"This is wonderful, sir—that I should find my brother so soon."

Ranleigh felt like putting in a word for himself, and he said:

"It is more wonderful that you should have met me, miss."

"It is indeed wonderful I should have met so good a friend. I owe much to you, sir, and I shall always be grateful."

"Will you, now?" said Ranleigh, letting his speech run into the brogue.

"I always shall."

"You do not know yet the magnitude of your obligations to me."

"Yes, I do."

"What will you say when I tell you that had it not been for me your brother at this moment would have been a corpse?"

The girl uttered a cry.

"Ah, you need not be afraid. He is all right and in good health."

"And here in New York?"

"Yes."

"Oh, please take me to him at once."

"Not at present; some matters are to be arranged first; but let me tell you a story."

"Please do, sir."

"I told you I found a photograph in your trunk?"

"Yes, sir."

"I concluded at once that it was the picture of your brother. I had read your diary."

"Oh, sir, how could you?"

"It was a matter of business. I might have saved your life had it been in immediate peril."

"I see. You are forgiven."

"Having read your diary, I knew the whole story. I was piping Moreland one day, when we came upon a youth who resembled the picture, and it is a singular fact that Moreland recognized the lad at the same time that I did. Moreland started to follow him, and I followed Moreland, but in some way the young man gave us the slip."

"But you have found him since?"

"I have; and I have met him under very singular circumstances."

"Where?"

"In a gambling hell."

The poor girl uttered a cry of anguish.

"You have a harrowing tale to tell me! Oh, possibly it were better if he were indeed dead!"

"No, he is all right; you need have no fear. I have a thrilling tale to tell you; but your brother is all right. He is saved. His life is saved, and his honor."

"And you saved both?"

"Well, I think I did."

"Noble man! What do I not owe you?"

"Let me tell you my story."

"Yes; proceed."

The detective then related all the facts we have already narrated to our readers, and when he had concluded, the girl in a moment of unrestrained enthusiasm and gratitude threw her arms around Ranleigh's neck and kissed him. Alas! she fixed the detective with that one kiss. The man had never loved in his life, but when those bright, warm lips were pressed to his cheek, his blood was thrilled, and yet the girl's action was but the outgrowth of gratitude. She was beside herself with joy upon learning that her brother was saved.

"Oh, how much we owe to you—how much we owe to you!" the girl kept repeating.

"Well, don't say any more about that just now; your brother is saved."

"And I shall see him?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"Some time within the next twenty-four hours."

"And we will sail for Ireland in the first steamer?"

"You will, certainly. You may, miss, but I do not think your brother will."

The girl looked at the detective in surprise.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"Your brother and I have some business to settle before he sails for Ireland."

"I do not understand. Is there something you have not revealed to me?"

"No; I have told you all."

"Then why can not my brother sail with me?"

"I tell you we have some business to settle."

"What can your business be, sir?"

"Moreland."

"What of him? You tell me you have the will?"

"Yes."

"My brother's identity can be established?"

"Certainly; but a great deal of trouble can be saved if we have the man Moreland on our side."

"I would not trust him."

"Nor I."

"Then how can he be of service to us?"

"I intend to get a hold over him. I intend that he shall sign a written confession."

"He will never do that."

The detective smiled, and answered:

"I reckon he will."

"Never."

"Will you aid me to compel him to do so?"

"I do not see that we need his assistance."

"That is because you are a woman; you do not understand the tricks of the law."

"And do you think he could make trouble?"

"He could keep your brother out of his rights for years; but I will see that he does not."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE detective proceeded from the presence of Margaret Treadwell to the hotel where Moreland was stopping, and was compelled to wait some time before the man came in. When the latter arrived, he asked, abruptly:

"Well, have you seen the girl?"

"I have, and she tells me a strange story."

"She told you a strange story before?"

"Yes; but a much stranger one since. She tells me she came to America to find a brother who is heir to a large estate in Ireland."

"Ah! she is trying to gull you with that tale, eh?"

"She can not gull me, sir; I believe her story."

"You do?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well?"

"She wants me to aid her in finding the young man."

"She desires to start you on a fool's errand?"

"I do not think so, sir."

"What do you propose to do?"

"I came to learn what you propose to do."

A moment Moreland was thoughtful, but at length he said:

"Have you recovered the papers?"

"I have."

"Where are they?"

"In my possession."

"You will pass them over to me?"

"Not at present."

"Not pass them to me?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"I wish to study up this matter a bit. I think there is something in this little life-drama for me."

"You are a villain!"

"And what are you? Come, let's have a complete understanding. I'm not a fool. I've got too much information; I've got things down too fine. Let's say we're both villains—that there is a pair of us—and we may come to a better understanding."

"You are a deep fellow!"

"Yes, I am pretty deep."

"You have led me into a trap."

"I think you were trying to lead me into a trap. But let's talk plain now. What's your game?"

"How much do you know?"

"I've got the whole business."

"You have the story the girl gave you?"

"Yes, confirmed by her brother."

Moreland started.

"Do you know her brother?"

"We have become acquainted."

"That is, you have become acquainted with the friend whom she has decided to call her brother."

"Oh, let go!" said the detective.

"How let go?"

"Do not try to gull me; come right out and talk business."

"What do you call business?"

"Do you want me to open it up?"

"Yes, I do."

"I can do it."

"I wish you would."

"I will."

"Do so."

"You want to get brother and sister out of the way. You are spending Francis Browne's money."

Moreland betrayed considerable excitement. He paced the room, and for some moments did not speak.

"It's no use," said the detective; "we must start out in this business on a square basis."

"You are taking advantage of me," at length said Moreland.

"And you wish to take advantage of an innocent girl and her brother. Do you know that I've got the whole history? I've told you so."

"And how will you act?"

"That depends."

"Upon what?"

"The terms."

"What terms?"

"The terms you make with me to serve you."

"What terms do you desire?"

"Money."

"How much?"

"Well, I've worked a long time, and I haven't struck a fortune yet. I'd like to strike one now."

"I am not a rich man."

"But you will be if you beat those orphans out of their estate."

"Will you name your terms?"

"I want ten thousand dollars."

"And what will you do for that amount?"

"You must first let me know what you want me to do."

Again Moreland walked the floor; his face was pale, his limbs trembled under him, and he showed other signs of great mental excitement. After a moment, he inquired in a husky voice:

"Have brother and sister met yet?"

"No."

"Does she know her brother is alive?"

"Yes."

"Where he is?"

"No."

"Does he know of his sister's existence?"

"Yes."

"Where she is?"

"No."

"And you have both in your power?"

"Both of them."

"They have your confidence?"

"Yes."

"Could they be disposed of, do you think?"

"How?"

"Can you not suggest a way to dispose of them?"

"Do you mean to have them strangled or drowned?"

"Either riddance would answer."

"How would it do to put the girl in a lunatic asylum and the young man in jail?"

"That would not do."

"Why not?"

"They would be likely to appear at any time."

"But you would have been paid for your services."

"That would not do."

"You want them fixed?"

"Yes."

"It is a cold-blooded murder you propose?"

"I want them out of the way."

"And how about the terms?"

"Your terms are accepted."

"But how do I know you will keep your word with me?—you are a stranger."

"I will keep my word."

"Oh, yes, you say so; but that is no guarantee for me. This is serious business you propose."

"The money will be paid."

"Will you sign a contract to that effect?"

"On one condition. You will surrender the papers when the money is paid."

"That is satisfactory to me. I will draw up a contract at once."

"But how will you accomplish the work?"

"I will send a man to you who will do it."

"Send a man to me?"

"Yes."

"But you were to do it."

"I am a detective, not a murderer. But I will supply one; and I will put him on the track of both his victims. It is an easy job. The girl is unknown in New York and will not be missed, and the young man is comparatively a stranger."

"You have all the facts down pretty well?"

"I have."

"And you will send me a man?"

"Yes."

"What will I have to pay him?"

"About a hundred dollars in each case."

"Are assassins so cheap in New York?"

"They are an imported article, like those who employ them, sir. But tell me, do you wish one?"

CHAPTER XXX.

RANLEAGH was playing a deep game. Moreland had accused the detective of getting him into a trap; but our hero was getting him into a worse trap.

"You mean to deal fairly?" said Moreland.

"I do," came the answer in an emphatic tone.

"Will you permit me to see the girl?"

"Yes."

"Alone?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"Any time; but we must complete our arrangements first."

"Will you send me a man?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"I thought you needed one, and I have a man ready."

"Can you not make the arrangements with him?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"On principle. I am a detective, not a murderer."

"I can not see where the distinction comes in when you are willing to provide both assassin and victims."

"There is a distinction."

"Where?"

"I do not propose to do all your work—assume all the responsibility, and let you slump me at the last moment."

"Ah, I see. Well, I will make my own bargain."

"You must."

"You say you have a man?"

"Yes."

"Have you let him into the secret?"

"I've let him know his services might be required."

"What countryman is he?"

"A Bohemian."

"When can you have him here?"

"Within an hour."

"I would like to talk with the man."

"You can."

"Bring him here."

Ranleigh went his way. The detective was chuckling within himself. He found the man Moreland an easy gudgeon to catch.

In about an hour the detective returned. He had a mean-looking specimen of manhood with him, whom he introduced to Moreland as Mr. Carl.

Moreland looked the man over. Indeed, the fellow had every appearance of an assassin.

"You are a poor man?" said Moreland.

"Yes."

"You want to make some money?"

"Yes."

"A large sum?"

The man's eyes glistened as he answered with a drawl:

"Yes."

"You will do anything for two hundred dollars?"

"Anything."

"And when you get the money?"

"I go away."

"Where?"

"I no tell."

We will not enter into all the details of the bloody contract. Suffice it to say that Moreland deliberately made a contract with the man to commit a cold-blooded murder—indeed, a couple of murders. After the contract was made and twenty dollars paid in advance, the man went away.

Moreland was very nervous, and during the whole time had drunk freely; indeed, he was partly intoxicated.

"So far, so good," he said.

"Yes; you have a good man for your work; and now make your contract with me."

Ranleigh drew up a brief contract. Moreland had had enough liquor to be reckless. The clerk of the hotel was called in to witness the signing of the contract, without knowing anything as to its provisions.

Ranleigh put the paper in his pocket, and said:

"You desire to see the girl?"

"Yes."

"Under what circumstances?"

"Can you arrange for me to meet her in some office where we can be alone?"

"Yes, I can arrange that well enough."

"That is what I most desire."

The detective had his contract, and had led Moreland into making a contract with the murderer, and he left the man, promising to make an arrangement for a meeting that night.

When left alone, Moreland threw himself upon his bed, and slept for some hours. When he awoke he was sobered up, and he began to think over what he had done. He saw that he had placed himself absolutely in the power of the detective, and a suspicion crossed his mind that the detective had "put up a job on him," as the term goes. He determined to wait until night, and see whether the officer kept his word as concerned the interview with the girl; and at that moment the man was resolved to attempt a plan that had long been running in his head.

Meantime, the detective returned to his lodgings, and met Phil by appointment.

"Phil," he said, "I will now make a revelation: I will take you to see your sister Margaret."

It would be hard to depict the young man's excitement and delight.

Our hero sat down and told the whole story to the young man—related to him all the facts which have already been detailed to our readers.

The young man listened with distended eyes, and when the detective had concluded, he said:

"How much we owe to you!"

"Young man, you owe all to a Higher Power than me. It was fortunate for you and your sister that I met her on that boat, or both your fates would have been sealed ere now."

"And I am to see my sister?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"At once. We will go now, as I have a plan to arrange with your sister and yourself. I've got this man Moreland in my grip at last. I've got him good and tight. But come, we will go to your sister's."

On the way Ranleigh asked:

"What occurred in the counting-room?"

"It was strange how coolly the managers of the bank took the affair."

"They were prepared for it. I had been in communication with them."

"Did they know of my implication in the matter?"

"No."

"Tally-ho may connect me with it."

"No; he will be silent."

"It may come out some day."

"No, it is all right; you need not fear."

"If I had not met you, I should have been a dead man now."

"You had made up your mind to kill yourself?"

"I had."

"You now have learned a lesson that will last you all your life."

"Yes, I have. But does my sister know of my adventures?"

"Yes; I told her all."

"Was there need to tell her?"

"I thought so."

The two proceeded along, and soon reached the house where Margaret boarded, and a moment later brother and sister were in each other's arms.

Explanations followed. The detective left them alone for two hours—gave them an opportunity to talk everything over, and then he appeared before them.

Both attempted to thank him, but he said:

"Wait; we are not yet through. When you are ready to sail, you may swing me your thanks in the wave of a handkerchief."

Ranleigh held a long interview, and arranged a plan with the brother and sister.

CHAPTER XXXI.

On the day following the incident previously narrated, Ranleigh met the man Moreland. The latter appeared quiet and dejected.

"I am here," said Ranleigh, "and I have arranged for you to meet the girl Margaret Treadwell."

"When am I to meet her?"

"To-day."

"Where?"

"At a hotel on — Street."

"A private hotel?"

"No hotels are private."

"I mean where I can have a private interview?"

"Yes; I arranged for that. I thought you would like to see her without interruption."

"At what hour am I to meet her?"

"At two o'clock."

"Good! And now I wish to ask you a question, Hunter."

Our readers will remember Hunter was the name under which Ranleigh had been introduced to Moreland.

"Go ahead; I am ready to answer all questions."

"Are you playing me?"

"How playing you?"

"You act very strangely."

"I do?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"You do not surrender the papers."

"I will in good time."

"Why not at once?"

"I wish to see how this affair comes out."

"I will tell you one thing."

"Proceed."

"It will not be well for you to play me false."

"Please do not attempt to threaten me, sir."

"I wish you to understand I am an Irishman, and we are a race not accustomed to let injuries pass unavenged."

"I would propose that we adjourn all this talk until after your interview with Miss Treadwell."

"All right; but there is one thing I wish you to well understand—no blood must be spilled until I give orders."

"That is all right."

"I may see fit to annul my contract with you."

"That is all right on one condition: you will have to make a money compromise with me."

The detective's answer was a cute one.

At two o'clock the detective and Moreland met, and the former led his man to the hotel where he was to meet Margaret.

"Go to Room 20," he said, "knock at the door, and you will be ushered into the presence of the girl."

"Does she know I am to meet her?"

"She knows that a gentleman is to meet her."

Moreland proceeded to the room and knocked, and the summons came:

"Enter!"

The man entered the room, and he and Margaret once more stood face to face. The girl uttered a scream. She had been instructed how to act.

"Is it you I was to meet?"

"Yes, Margaret; I come as your friend."

"You my friend?"

"Yes."

"It's false!"

"Will you listen to me?"

"What can you say to me?"

"I have much to say. Will you listen to me?"

"I ought not to listen to one word!"

"Why not?"

"You are an enemy; you sought to betray me."

"I admit the fact."

"You admit the fact?"

"I do."

"And dare come here and ask me to listen to you?"

"Yes."

"This is impertinence!"

"No, it is not. Will you listen to me?"

"I may. Proceed."

"I will admit I was your enemy. I was employed by Francis

Browne to put you out of the way."

"You dare admit this?"

"Yes, I admit it."

"You admit you were hired to murder me?"

"No, not murder you."

"What then?"

"I was to prevent your meeting with your brother."

"And you were hired to do this?"

"Yes."

"By Browne?"

"Yes."

"How dare you come here and confess it?"

"You will understand when you hear all I have to say. I was

your enemy; I am now your friend."

"You are now my friend?"

"Yes."

"What makes you my friend?"

"I am convinced that your cause is just."

"Didn't you know it was just?"

"No; Francis Browne led me to believe that you were an impos-

tor. I am now convinced that you are not."

"No thanks to you, sir, for the admission."

"I have a proposition to make."

"You need make none to me."

"With my help you can regain your brother's rights; without

my help you never can."

"And what do you propose?"

The man hesitated a moment.

"Ah, I see your offer of friendship is not wholly disinterested."

"It is not; and I will speak plainly. I love you."

The girl laughed, and repeated:

"You love me?"

"Yes."

"This is nonsense!"

"Listen: I am a man of good family. I am possessed of moderate means. Become my wife, and your brother will gain his

estate."

"And if I refuse?"

"I become your enemy, and he will die a beggar! Indeed,

neither he nor you will ever see Ireland again."

"You threaten in advance?"

"I am merely presenting the case."

"I refuse to become your wife! I despise you!"

"Think over what I have said before you speak."

"I have thought it all over."

"And you refuse my offer?"

"I do."

"Then I turn against you!"

"You can do me no more harm than you have already."

"You will never see Ireland again!"

"Let me ask you a question: do you know my brother lives?"

"Yes."

"How is it you know that he lives?"

"I have seen him."

"You have seen him?"

"Yes."

"Late?"

"Within two or three days."

In a cold tone Margaret said:

"Well, I guess that is all I need."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that you have had your turn; it is now mine."

The man turned pale, and said:

"You threaten me?"

"No, I do not threaten; I mean to put my plan into execution."

"Put your plan into execution?"

"Yes."

"What do you propose to do?"

"Arrest you."

"Arrest me?"

"Yes."

"For what?"
 "Stealing my trunks."
 The man laughed, and said:
 "This is nonsense!"
 "Oh, no, you will find it is not nonsense."
 "I know nothing about your trunks."
 "You know a man named Hunter?"
 "I do."
 "He was employed by me."

CHAPTER XXXII.

MORELAND gave a start and turned pale; his knees knocked under him.

"What is that you say?" he demanded.
 "Mr. Hunter, the detective, is in my employ."
 "In your employ?"
 "Yes."

The man recovered his nerve, and attempted to laugh in a contemptuous manner.

"You only think he is in your employ."
 "I know he is, sir."

"I employed Mr. Hunter to find you and your brother. I employed him to tell you all the stories he has told you. You have been deceived. The money of Francis Browne has been paid to this man Hunter. He pretends to be your friend, but is really working against you; indeed, he has offered, for a certain sum, to put you in a mad-house and send your brother to jail."

Margaret turned slightly pale. On the face of his statement there was a possibility of its being true. The girl knew the power of money. She knew she had none to offer cash down; she knew Moreland had.

The latter saw his advantage, and said:

"You have proof of that man's treachery to you. He arranged this interview. He will do as I say. You are in my power!"

The girl for a moment was set back. There came a remembrance how the detective had saved her brother; she also remembered that she knew his real name, while to Moreland he was known as Hunter.

"I am still ready to be your friend, Margaret."

"No, sir; I do not desire your friendship. You are a traitor, a mean, contemptible man! You have belied my best and truest friend; but he is here to speak for himself."

The door opened and Ranleagh entered the room.

"Ah, I am glad you have come," said Moreland.

"Yes, I am glad to be here."

"It is time to lower the mask, Mr. Hunter."

"I think it is," responded Ranleagh.

"This poor deluded girl can not understand how you are in my employ."

"That is not strange, since I have led her to believe I was her friend."

A smile played over Moreland's face, and he said:

"Undeceive her."

"Yes; it is time that the mask should be dropped."

There was something in the detective's tone that caused Moreland to wince.

"Tell her you are really in my employ."

"I was in your employ, but I am not now."

"Eh? You mean to desert me?"

"Mr. Moreland, you said it was time to drop the mask. You were right; I drop it. I am this lady's friend—I have been all through; I've been leading you on. I've been playing to get a grip on you, and I've got it."

Moreland's face became purple.

"How dare you?"

"Dare! why, sir, I am Ranleagh, the Irish Lightning Detective. I dare anything that's right; and, as an Irishman, do you suppose I'd permit you to abuse a poor friendless Irish girl in America? No, no; I've played you nice. You're in my power under American law. You will go to jail for life."

The man trembled, and then sought to assume a brave attitude.

"This is all nonsense!" he said.

"Just listen to me a moment, and we will see if it is all nonsense."

In the first place, you stole this lady's trunks; that is a State's prison offense, and I have the evidence dead on you. I have the steward who delivered the baggage; I have the cabman who carried it away; I have the detective whom you engaged to recover it; I have my own evidence that you did recover it, and that at this moment it is in your possession."

"It's false!" exclaimed the man.

"I have a contract with you, wherein you employed me to commit a murder for a sum of money. I have another detective who played the part of the Bohemian, whom you employed to do the deed. Yes, sir, I have a complete chain of evidence against you."

In the face of the detective's declaration, the man realized that indeed the evidence against him was appalling.

"I have been tricked!" he exclaimed.

"Yes; you have been tricked by an Irish-American. Lightning was on your track, and lightning always strikes somewhere, and this time it strikes you. And now, what are you going to do about it?"

"What can I do?"

"Ah! you see your peril?"

"I see I have been caught in the web of a deep and well-laid conspiracy."

"You call it a conspiracy?"

"I do."

"And what was your game?"

The man made no answer.

"Mr. Moreland, I've a word to say—you are in a trap."

"I am."

"There is a way out of it."

"How?"

"You must make a full confession, and sign all the necessary documents that will enable Philip Treadwell to recover his estate. Who are you, anyway?"

"I am a lawyer."

"I thought so."

"What do you want me to do?"

"I wish you to sign a written confession of your employment by Francis Browne."

"And put myself in the power of the law?"

"You are already in the power of the law, and there is but one road of escape, and that I offer you."

"What else am I to do?"

"Go before the British consul and swear to the identity of Phil Treadwell."

"And if I do, I will only escape jail in America to be sent to jail in Ireland."

"No."

"How can I escape?"

"You need not go to Ireland."

"And you will not prosecute me here?"

"I will not, on condition that you make all the reparation in your power."

"But I have property in Ireland."

"Mr. Treadwell will agree to purchase all your property."

"Francis Browne owes me large sums."

"That is your matter with him."

"I am a ruined man."

"Not necessarily; you can become an honest man even now."

"Oh! why was I ever tempted to enter into this affair? I am ruined!"

"You should have thought of that before you did enter into it. But listen: Browne will not make a fight. Your confession will not be used; if it is not, you can return to Ireland or England, and, as far as we are concerned, no one will know what a villain you really are."

"Will you give me time to think this matter over?"

"Yes."

"I will go, and you can come and see me to-night."

"No, no; we do not do business that way, under the circumstances."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THERE was a pleasant smile on Ranleagh's face as he made the remark.

"What do you want me to do? Am I already under arrest?"

"Yes, you are already under arrest."

"Do not drive me too fast."

"I will drive you until you do what is right."

"What do you call right?"

"You will sign all the papers at once."

"And then?"

"Then you are free to go and come."

"I will be glad to do so; I have not had an hour's peace since I entered into this scheme. And I want you to bear in mind that I said no harm was to be done to either Margaret or her brother until I gave orders. I never intended to give the order."

"We will not talk about that. You are a lawyer. We have pen and paper right here ready. Draw up your statement."

The man was compelled to sit down and draw up a full statement. There was a carriage at the door, and he was driven to the office of the British consul, where all the papers were signed; then the party left the office.

"Will you come to my hotel and see me to-night?" demanded Moreland.

"I will come; yes, sir."

"Bring Phil with you."

"I will come."

The men separated, and Phil and the detective returned to the house, where they joined Margaret. The brother and sister started out to be very profuse in their expression of thanks, but the officer cut them short, and said:

"I suppose you intend to return immediately to Ireland?"

"Yes."

"Do you need my services?"

A blush mantled Margaret's face as she said:

"I intended to ask you if you could make arrangements to accompany us."

"I can. I am about to resign from the regular force, and I have a chance to enter a private agency. I want to see Ireland—old Ireland—and I will go with you."

"We will pay you well for your services."

"We will not talk about that now, but I will say, as Master Phil is a rich man, he can refund to me my expenses."

That same evening Ranleagh and Phil called on Moreland, and the latter said:

"I am about to furnish you certain letters and information that will be of service to you. I have all Browne's letters to me, containing his instructions; those I propose to give you."

"You are doing wisely."

"I have a favor to ask: my connection with this affair is not to be made public unless the necessity arrives?"

"No, sir."

"Then I am all right. These letters will compel Browne to abdicate at once and acknowledge the heir."

The letters were secured, and Ranleagh and Phil returned to the detective's quarters.

On the day following the incidents we have described, passage

was engaged for Queenstown, and on the following day the party sailed for Ireland.

Ranleagh was quite a happy man. The idea of visiting Ireland was the real fulfillment of a life-dream. He also enjoyed the company of Margaret, and while the weather remained good they were daily on deck.

On the fifth day out, however, a terrible storm arose. The ship was held to her course and met the storm well; but as the gale increased in violence, even the sailors went about their work with pale faces.

The passengers were all ordered below, but Ranleagh had managed to remain on deck, and when the gale was at its height he went below. He met Margaret; the latter's face was pale. She was sorely frightened; she did not wish to die. She hoped to live to reach her home and see her brother once installed as master of the Treadwell estate. Her face wore a look of terror and despair when Ranleagh joined her in the cabin. None of the party was troubled with *mal-de-mer*. As the detective approached her, the girl saw he was smiling, and when he came to her, she said:

"You smile?"

"Why not?" he answered. "It's a jolly storm."

"But we are doomed!"

"Doomed, is it?" cried Ranleagh, assuming the brogue. "Why, my dear girl, yer as safe as though ye were already playing croquet on the lawn of Treadwell Manor."

Ranleagh's magnificent courage inspired the girl.

"You think there is no danger?"

"Well, there may be a bit of danger; but this ship is going through all right, and don't ye forget it!"

Before the following day the storm abated, and upon the second day the good ship was sailing through a comparatively smooth sea, and the passengers were promenading the deck as happy as people ought to be who have passed through a terrible storm at sea and know that they are approaching land.

It was a clear moonlight night. Margaret and Ranleagh were sitting on the deck, and the former said:

"What a strange experience mine has been!"

Ranleagh liked to assume the brogue, and he answered:

"Indade, but it has been, as ye say, a strange experience, and I'm hopin' that more may come of it than yer thinkin'."

There was a merry and hopeful twinkle in Ranleagh's eyes as he spoke.

"When I started for America I felt myself the most friendless being on earth, and ere I reached the American shore I met a good friend."

"Yes; and it was a scurvy trick ye played him."

"I tremble when I think of the danger into which I ran."

"You did run into danger, and your peril was greater than you imagine, and you are not entirely out of danger yet."

Again there was a merry twinkle in the detective's eyes.

"I hope we will have no trouble in gaining my brother's rights."

"I think not." And Ranleagh involuntarily commenced humming the tune of the "Pretty Maid Milking Her Cow." The air is set to other words, which had a direct bearing upon the feelings of the Irish-American at that moment.

"Were you born in America?" asked Margaret.

"No; I was born in Ireland."

"Then you are an Irishman?"

"By birth; but I was a mere child when my parents emigrated, and I have no recollection of the fatherland."

"You have relatives there?"

"I believe I have; but I've never been in communication with them."

"You would not like to settle in Ireland?"

"I would not. I love the land where I was reared."

Ranleagh remembered the conversation with Margaret, and especially her last question, and on the latter he based a fulfillment of certain hopes that had arisen in his heart.

A few days later and the good ship was anchored off Queenstown, and our party shortly after went ashore.

Ranleagh was delighted. He flipped pennies to the boys until it seemed as though he would expend a fortune.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

UPON the day following their arrival, the party reached Dublin and put up at the Shelbourne House, and, for reasons, Phil and his sister registered under assumed names.

Ranleagh, meantime, had his directions, and after a day's rest, he started for the Treadwell homestead.

The detective enjoyed surprises and all manner of curious doings, and he determined to make his advent into the presence of Francis Browne as startling and romantic as circumstances would permit.

It was a handsome house in the suburbs of the city where Francis Browne resided; the building was a part of the Treadwell estate. It was night when our hero reached the house. Got up in the garb of a poor old man, he sought admittance to the house, and after some trouble was shown into the library, and after a good long wait, the master appeared. He was a mean-looking man; he had been overseer on the estate, and was harsh and imperious in his manner.

Looking over our hero, he demanded:

"Well, what do you want? Your face is not familiar to me. I suppose you have come to make a complaint, or beg off from paying your rent?"

"Well, sir, if I hev?" said Ranleagh, in an humble tone.

"You can get off about your business!"

"And will you not listen to me story?"

"I'll not listen to a word! They had no business to admit you here."

"Ye are a hard man!"

"Hold! I'll take none of your impertinence; I've stood too much of that from others already."

"Ye will listen to me, sir?"

"Not a word! And now off with you about your business."

"I'll not go a step."

"You will not."

"I will not."

"Old man, I'll take you by the collar and throw you from the door!"

"You will not! and it's glad I am to discover ye are such a hard-hearted man, as I'll hev less compunction in tellin' me tale."

Browne walked over, and said:

"You'll go out."

"I'll not! And don't ye attempt to put yer hand on me or ye'll get hurted."

Browne's eyes flashed, and he reached forth his hand, when Ranleagh rose with flashing eyes, and said:

"Howld, ye villain! I've warned ye! Don't ye dare!"

"You call me a villain?"

"Indade I do, and I am here to prove ye one!"

The boldness of the words momentarily paralyzed Browne.

"What do you mean, you scoundrel?"

"I mane what I say. I'm not here to ask a favor of ye. Shure, and if I had a favor to ask, I'd go to the true owner of this property, and not come to you!"

Browne cooled down at once. He took a seat, and said in a tone of forced pleasantness:

"I'll humor you, old man."

"Indade ye will."

Browne was a shrewd man, and he discerned that the visitor had come with a purpose.

"Will you repeat what you said?" he asked.

"I will. I said if I'd a favor to ask I'd go to the real owner of these fine lands."

"You would?"

"I would."

"Where would you go to find him?"

"Not far."

"You wouldn't go far?"

"No, sir."

"Not out of Ireland?"

"No, sir."

"You are here with a purpose?"

"I am."

"Who are you?"

"That's my business."

"You will not tell me your name?"

"I will not."

"And you are here to talk business?"

"I am."

Browne looked around furtively.

"Are you sane, man?"

"I am."

"You know what you are talking about?"

"I do."

"Suppose I send for a policeman?"

"Ye may if ye choose."

Browne laughed, and said:

"You amuse me. What have you to say?"

"Are ye ready to surrender this property to the true heir?"

"I am."

"Now ye talk like a man."

"Yes; I will surrender it to the true heir."

The man emphasized the words *true heir*.

"I wouldn't ask ye to surrender it to any one else."

"You are very considerate. And who, pray, is the true heir?"

"Philip Treadwell."

"Are you Philip Treadwell?"

"I am not."

"Who are you?"

"I am his friend."

"And you have come for the property?"

"I have."

"Will you take it with you?"

"It's joking ye are; but I'll take the joke out of ye. Mr. Philip Treadwell is in Ireland."

"Is he indeed?"

"He is."

"Why didn't he come with you?"

"He'll come to-morrow, sir, when you are moving out."

"To-morrow, when I am moving out?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then he will give me time to move out?"

"Not much time."

"My friend, don't you think we have joked enough?"

"I do, sir."

"Then you quit."

"No, sir; I've a message for you."

"Ah, indeed! What is it?"

"Mr. Philip wants to know when you will surrender."

"He wants to know?"

"Yes."

"Let Mr. Philip come in person."

"He'll come, sir, soon enough, and you will recognize him at a glance."

"This is a nice little scheme of yours."

"Do you think it's a scheme?"

"I do."

"Mebbe you think I do not know what I am talking about?"

"That's my idea."

"Would you like to go to jail?"

"Not this year."
 "You will go if yer not careful."
 "I do not feel like standing any more of your insults."
 "Do you remember a man named Moreland?"
 Browne turned pale.
 "Ah! I thought I'd take the coldness out of ye. Yes, sir, you do know a man named Moreland."
 "I do not."
 "You never knew him?"
 "Never."
 "You never wrote to him?"
 "Never."
 "I might believe that only for one thing: I have the letters you wrote to him."
 Browne leaped to his feet, and exclaimed:
 "You have the letters?"
 "Yes."
 "Where?"
 "I hev them here, sir."
 Ranleagh struck his hand against his pocket. Browne sprung across the room and seized his visitor, and a struggle commenced—a desperate struggle.

CHAPTER XXXV.

BROWNE was a powerful man, but our hero was the more powerful individual of the two. He bore his man to the floor, and quick as a wink afterward clapped handcuffs on him, and then said:
 "Now, sir, you may rise."
 Meantime a servant ran into the room.
 "You can go," said our hero, and he pointed to the handcuffs. The servant did not know what it all meant, but he left.
 Browne stood gazing in amazement. He was too dazed to speak for some moments, but at length he demanded:
 "What does this mean?"
 "It means your time has come."
 Our hero had dropped the brogue.
 "Will you explain? This is very extraordinary."
 "Do you think so?"
 "Why am I put in irons?"
 "That is what you deserve; but listen to me. Moreland has confessed. Margaret Treadwell and her brother are in Ireland, and I have all your letters giving instructions for the murder; and each letter is attested by the man to whom it was written."
 Browne was stricken dumb.
 "We've got you, sir, where you can't even squirm."
 "You are an American."
 "Am I?"
 "Yes."
 "How do you know?"
 "From your speech."
 "Well?"
 "I've one word to say."
 "Speak a dozen if they are of the right kind."
 "I will buy you!"
 "Buy me?"
 "Yes."
 "What with, sir?"
 "Money—gold!"
 "You are not speaking the right words. And now listen: I can not be bought."
 "What do you seek?"
 "I will show you my documents."
 The detective proceeded, and showed his man all the proofs, and, indeed, told him the whole story, or that part it was necessary to tell.
 "I am ruined!" muttered Browne.
 "I think you are."
 "I am lost!"
 "You are, sir."
 "Will you do me one kindness?"
 "What shall I do?"
 "Blow out my brains, or release me, so I can do it myself."
 "No, sir; there is no need to do that."
 "I am a prisoner."
 "But you can be free."
 "Free?"
 "Yes."
 "How?"
 "Surrender this estate, welcome the true heir, and no one shall ever know what a villain you are. You can appear as an honorable man, you can claim that you voluntarily surrendered the property the moment the true heir appeared."
 "And those papers will be burned?"

"No; but they will never be made public."
 "Where is Philip?"
 "Never mind. Do you surrender?"
 "I do."
 "Do you accept the terms?"
 "I do."
 "And you will not attempt to make any trouble?"
 "It would be useless for me to do so."
 "That is what I think."
 "I will do anything you say."
 Ranleagh removed the irons, and said:
 "I've a proposition: accompany me to Dublin, and acknowledge the heir at once."
 "I am ready."
 "You will go?"
 "I will."

Some time later the two arrived in the city. The evidence furnished by our hero had been overwhelming, or Browne would not have surrendered so easily.

A few moments after their arrival at the hotel, they stopped to exchange a few words.

"Who are you, sir?"
 "I am an American detective."
 "Does Philip know of the letters and evidence?"
 "Yes."

Our hero led the way into the parlor, where Margaret and Philip awaited his coming. Margaret recognized Browne at once.

"Where is Philip?" demanded the man.
 The young man stepped forward.
 "Will you forgive me?" he said.

Silence followed.
 "Speak, Phil," said our hero.
 "What shall I do?"
 "All's well that ends well, my boy. Your relatives acknowledge your claim; you can agree to forgive him."
 "But his attempts against my sister?"
 "Let it all pass."

"To me your words are law; your advice I can always take."
 In a few days matters were all arranged. Francis Browne had been environed by the detective in such a manner that surrender was all that was left to him.

Phil Treadwell took possession of his estate, and was duly welcomed and recognized on every hand as the true heir; after a month had passed, our hero, who had been his guest, announced his intention to return to New York.

On the following day Ranleagh and Miss Treadwell were walking together, and the girl, who had been in a meditative mood, said:
 "Mr. Ranleagh, my brother has not yet settled with you for your services."

Ranleagh smiled, and said:
 "Well, miss, it's not his fault; he has tried several times to get me to name the price as a reward for my services."

"And why do you not do so?"
 "Well, I'll tell you; I was waiting to have a little talk with you."
 "A talk with me?"

"Yes."
 The blushes reddened the Irish girl's cheeks.
 Ranleagh fell off into the brogue as he said:

"How do you loike America?"
 The girl did not answer.

"Do you think ye could ever reconcile yersel' to live there?"
 "America is a beautiful country."

"It is; and do you loike a sea voyage?"
 "I don't know; but I will ask what has all this to do with the matter of my brother's obligations to you?"

"Well, I'll tell ye when ye answer me questions."
 "I like America."

"And could ye make up yer mind to live there?"
 "If my brother should conclude to remove to America I could be happy there."

"Ah! ye wouldn't go widout yer brother?"
 "I might," came the answer.

Ranleagh smiled all over; his heart was full.
 "I've one more question to ask ye: could ye be happy there wid me, as my wife?"

The girl blushed and did not answer.

"I'll tell ye, I wer' of a mind to ask yer brother for his sister as settlement in full of my claim."

Margaret placed her hand in Ranleagh's.

"You are a true and brave man. Do you ask me to become your wife?"

"I do."
 "I will be proud to marry you."

A week later Mr. and Mrs. Ranleagh sailed for New York, and the Lightning Irish Detective resumed his profession.

THE END.

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